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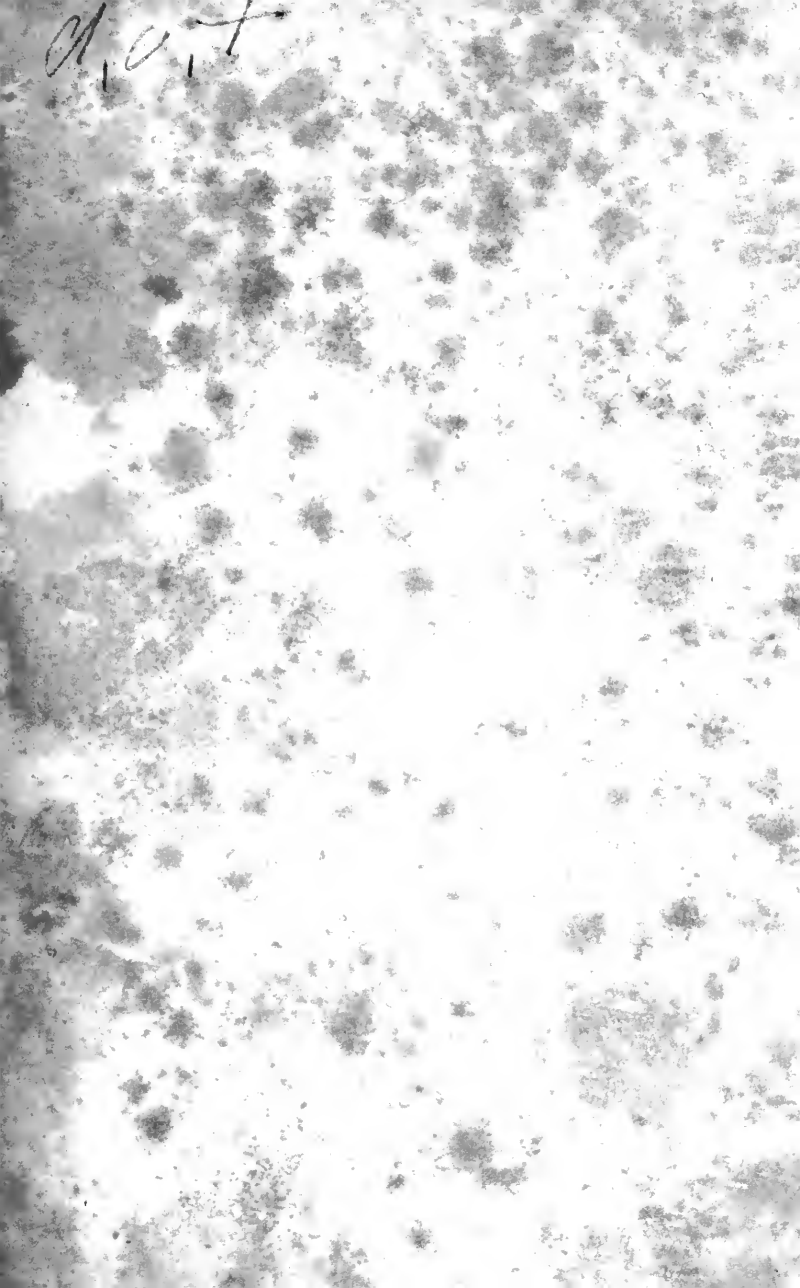
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George.
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GLEANINGS AND GROUPINGS

FROM

A PASTOR'S PORTFOLIO.

BY

REV. JOSHUA N. DANFORTH.

"But where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?
The gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be
for jewels of fine gold."—Job.

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PREFACE.

IF "of making many books there is no end," it is some consolation to an author, that the generation of readers never dies; and a still greater one to readers, that they can make their own selections from a continually enlarging field. Among the chartered elements of freedom in this noble country are the pen and the press. Men may think what they please, and write what they think, so that they invade no prerogative of God, violate no dictates of a sound conscience, and trespass on no rights of their fellow-men. At the same time they should maintain a manly intimacy with truth, and cherish a warm congeniality with the spirit of humanity and progressive knowledge. The contents of the following pages are not hasty effusions, the results of the random impulse of the moment, or the amusement of an idle hour, or the dreams of a vagrant imagination. Such as they are, they have been well considered, being the fruits of mature reflection. Less than this, a due and decent respect for the public would forbid. Less than this, the proper respect of an author for himself would not allow.

This volume is miscellaneous; sketching a scene here, drawing a portrait there; now endeavoring to inspire a love of truth and beauty by drawing from the

resources of Nature and Revelation ; now appealing to facts in individual and general history to illustrate principles. Domestic life and love ever reflecting a charm on our common humanity ; the sweet and impressive lessons of the revolving seasons ; the light, the loveliness, and the loftiness of poetry, as emanating from the master-spirits of their respective generations ; the sublime heroism of men who, in the exercise of a calm faith and burning devotion, have commanded the homage of the good, and received the approving smile of Heaven ;—these are among the leading themes of contemplation in this book.

Our religious literature is in its *formation* state. I would contribute a stone to what is yet to be a beautiful structure. One flower may I be permitted to plant in this growing garden ; to deposit one gem in our home cabinet, destined yet to compare well with the rich collections of other nations. There should be more *patriotism* in our literature. This mighty sentiment has immense moral power to sustain us as a nation. We must contend also for a national literature that shall be ancillary, not antagonistic to the spirit of Christianity. While we admire and revere the men of genius, the heroic and the devoted spirits of other days, we should not forget our own capabilities. A noble field have we to cultivate. Let none be ashamed to work in it. The learned astronomer demonstrates the laws of the universe ; the humble pilot guides his bark ; the industrious mechanic plies his tools. Each fills his sphere. With us so let it be. Let us be content with “a *fit* audience, though few.” In the language of Blackwood : “And why not sing for a small audience as well

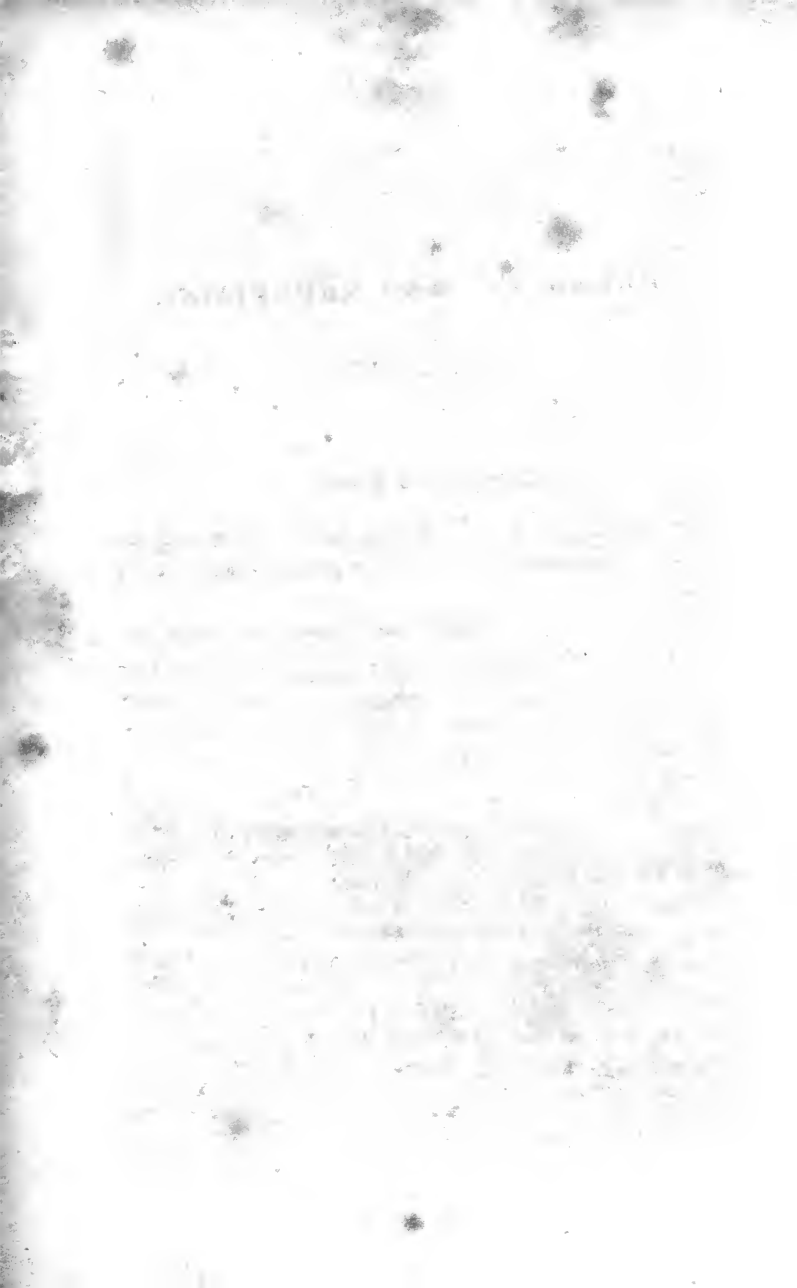
as for a great? It is not every Colin that can pipe that can now expect to draw the whole country-side to listen to him. What if he can please only a quiet domestic gathering, his neighbors or his clan? We are not of those who would tell Colin to lay down his pipe: we might whisper in his ear to mind his sheep as well, and not to break his heart, or disturb his peace, because some sixty persons, and not six thousand, are grateful for his minstrelsy."

ALEXANDRIA, VA., DECEMBER, 1851.

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GLEANINGS AND GROUPINGS.

I.

Thoughts on Home.

THIS is a sweet word. Who is not charmed with its music? Who hath not felt the potent magic of its spell?

By Home I do not mean the house, the parlor, the fireside, the carpet, or the chairs. They are inert, material things, which derive all their interest from the idea of the Home which is their locality. Home is something more ethereal, less tangible, not easily described, yet strongly conceived—the source of some of the deepest emotions of the soul, grasping the heart-strings with such a sweet and tender force, as subdues all within the range of its influence.

Home is the palace of the husband and the father. He is the monarch of that little empire, wearing a crown that is the gift of Heaven, swaying a scepter put into his hands by the Father of all, acknowledging no superior, fearing no rival, and dreading no usurper. In him dwells Love—the ruling spirit of home. She that was the fond bride of his youthful heart, is the affectionate wife of his maturer years.

The star that smiled on their bridal eve has never

set. Its rays still shed a serene lustre on the horizon of home. There, too, is the additional ornament of home—the circle of children, beautifully represented by the Spirit of inspiration as “olive-plants round about the table.” We have been such. There was our cradle. That cradle was rocked by a hand ever open to supply our wants; watched by an eye ever awake to the approach of danger. Many a live-long night has that eye refused to be closed for thy sake, reader, when thou, a helpless child, wast indebted to a mother’s love, sanctified by Heaven’s blessing, for a prolonged existence through a sickly infancy. Hast thou ever grieved that fond heart? No tears can be too freely—too sincerely shed for such an offense against the sweet charities of home. If there was joy in the parlor at thy birth, oh, never let it be turned into sorrow by any violation of the sacred laws of home.

We who had our happy birth, like most of the human race, in the country, can recall many tender and pleasant associations of home. There is earnest poetry in this part of our life. We remember with delight the freshness of the early morn; the tuneful and sprightly walk among the dewy fields; the cool repose amid the sequestered shades of the grove, vocal with the music of Nature’s inimitable warblers; the “tinkling spring,” where we slaked our thirst with the pellucid waters, as they came from the hand of the Mighty One—the bleating of the flocks, the lowing of the herds, the humming of the bees, the cry of the whippowil, the melancholy, monotonous song of the night-bird, relieved only by the deep base of that single note, which he uttered as he plunged from his lofty hight into a lower

region of atmosphere—these are among our recollections of home. And they come softened and sobered through the medium of the past, but without losing their power to touch the heart, and still endear that word *home*.

There, too, perhaps, we saw a father die; having attained to a patriarchal age, he bowed himself on his bed, saying, "Behold I die, but God shall be with you," and was gathered to his people. Nor can the memory ever forget that mother in her meek and quiet old age, walking through many a peaceful year on the verge of heaven, breathing its atmosphere, inhaling its fragrance, reflecting its light and holy beauty, till at length she left the sweet home of earth for her Father's home in heaven.

"So gently dies the wave upon the shore."

Home, too, is the scene of the gay and joyous bridal. When the lovely daughter, affianced to the youth of her heart, stands up to take the irrevocable pledge, what an interesting moment! I saw, not long since, such a one. She stood unconscious of the blended charm which innocence and beauty threw around her face and person; her soft, smooth, polished forehead was circled with a wreath of flowers; her robe was of purest white, and in her hand was held a bouquet of variegated roses. Beside her stood the happy man, for whom she was to be

"A guardian angel o'er his life presiding,
Doubling his pleasures and his cares dividing."

As I pronounced the words *that made them one*, adding the nuptial benediction, a tear fell from the eye

of the bride on the wreath in her hand! It was a tribute to "home, sweet home." Not that she loved father and mother less, but husband more. That piece of music, "The Bride's Farewell," plunges deeper into the fountain of emotion in the soul than any other combination of thought and song to which I ever listened. Was the bride ever found who was equal to its performance on the day of her espousals—or rather in the hour of her departure from her long-loved home, when the time had arrived to bid farewell to father, mother, brother, and sister? Perhaps in looking at the picture of domestic life, as exhibited in such circumstances, we should not omit to notice some of the least prominent traits and coloring, for they never escape the keen and practiced eye of the true poet. Thus Rogers, in his graphic and natural poem of Human Life, in which he snatches so many graces "beyond the reach of art," does not, in describing the wedding scene, forget the younger portion of the family, even the little daughter, so often the gem and the joy of home:

"Then are they blest indeed, and swift the hours,
Till her young sisters wreath her hair in flowers,
Kindling her beauty; while, unseen, *the least*
Twitches her robe, then runs behind the rest—
Known by her laugh, that will not be suppressed."

But even this picture must be shaded. If the cradle be one of the things of home, so is the coffin! The bridal robe is, alas! too often succeeded by the funeral pall. "Six years ago," heard I the minister of God say at the funeral of a young and lovely member of a friend's family, "she who lies there stood here to take

the marriage vows. She is now the bride of death." Striking thought! How short the passage from the home of love and felicity to the grave! A few years since I sat amid a domestic circle of father, mother, three sons, and a daughter. It was the home of hospitality. Where are they now? The solemn churchyard will tell. They have all sunk into the long, dreamless repose of the grave. Silent are those halls that once echoed to the cheerful sound of their voices. They have gone to their "long home." And we follow. In the fine language of Paul, "it becomes those who have wives, to be as though they had none, and those that weep, as though they wept not, and those that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not;"—let us add, *and those who have a home, to be as though they had none*, for "the fashion of this world passeth away!"

II.

Things Essential to a Happy Home.

THE first home on earth was a paradise. It was the beautiful creation of an infinitely wise God—of "Him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." It was a spot over which the genius of poetry has shed its softest lustre, especially on the page of Milton, whose conceptions seem to ascend to the very borders of inspiration while he communes with the past, and gathers immortality for the future. In that garden home of the first of our race grew

"Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose."

In that single line of comprehensive beauty lies a page of description. It may be considered as embracing the physical, moral, and spiritual perfection of that holy and blessed home.

In sketching individual prerogative and character, the same master of human philosophy, who taught "in numbers," says :

"For in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed),
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he, and valor formed,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace:
He for God only, she for God in him!"

This is truth and nature. The sense of man approves the picture. Angels beheld it with joy and songs of praise. The morning stars smiled in beauty on the scene of domestic bliss which the fourth book of Paradise Lost has placed beyond further description. If imagination has thrown her warm coloring over the scene, she has violated no sentiment of propriety, no oracle of the sacred canon. The intellect with which she was associated formed noble conceptions of the DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION. "He for God only," chiefly, sublimely, devotedly! There was the chief end of man indissolubly connected with the basis of that constitution. In him was vested the "true authority." His soul was formed for profound contemplations. The arcana of nature were to be revealed to him, and he was to be the principal author of progress from age to age. His mind was to be the chief agent in demonstrating

the sublime laws impressed by the Creator on universal matter, and to him was destined to belong the moral grandeur of those discoveries, which have often created and always illustrated the epochs of time, and changed the face of the world. How simple the language, how sublime the idea, "made in the image of God!"—in his intellectual and spiritual image.

This is the patent of his nobility. A king may reign in the plenitude of his power to-day. To-morrow he may be discrowned and dethroned, his scepter tossed into the sea, his throne dashed to pieces in the streets, his regal robes trampled in the dust, and himself a fugitive from his own dominions. This "hath been, and shall be."

But who shall take the crown from the monarch of the family? Who hath a right to his scepter? Who shall dare usurp his prerogatives?—who interfere with that "true authority?" Who shall claim that "truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure," which God has assigned to him? Not one.

Here, then, are the attributes and prerogatives of the father of the family, and hence his weighty OBLIGATIONS. In their nature they are untransferable, as much so as any other moral obligation. He might as well attempt to transfer the duty of *protection* or of *provision* to another arm, as that of *government* and *instruction*. Many pleasant things are said and sung about the tenderness of a mother's love, and the soft and persuasive tones of her voice, as the most potent of all influences for the development of filial love and duty, and I would not speak lightly of these elemental contributions to the beauty or the comfort of our mor-

tal existence, but I do not find that God has conferred any exclusive prerogative on the mother, or attached to her any special obligation. If there be any preponderance of duty, it seems to inhere in the father. Thus God says, not of Sarah, but of Abraham, "I know *him*, that *he* will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." So the avenging judgments of heaven fell on the house of Eli, because "his sons made themselves vile, and *he* restrained them not." In the one case parental obligation was discharged, in the other it was neglected by the father, and these fathers were accordingly commended or condemned. The true and primeval authority is with the man, who was "made for God," while the woman was made for him, "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man." "Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." Not that he should lord it over her with a despotism as despicable as the soul that is insensible to the delicacy of the tender sex; for as good old Matthew Henry says, she was taken "not out of his head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." If this be a little fanciful, it is quite beautiful, and not a little instructive.

It does not impair or impugn the authority of him, who is the "head of the wife, *even as Christ is the head of the Church.*" A mighty argument in a short phrase. Let the husband and father study that phrase. It is vital with the seeds of apt and holy instruction. Let him open his soul to the force of that argument. It will

teach him to construe his marital and paternal authority as most effectually to fulfill the ends of the family constitution. Here we have, not the *beau idéal* of the heavenly art, but the living model, the actual standard of perfection, exalted far above all principalities and powers, yet invested with humanity, that the partakers of that nature may neither be overpowered nor repelled in their efforts to be conformed to the divine image. Christ our exemplar!

The husband and father, then, is bound by an inevitable obligation to vindicate his authority before the family, 1. *By acquainting himself with all the duties of that sacred relation.* If a man, appointed to an office in the State, neglects to acquaint himself with the duties of that office, and the State thereby suffers injury, he encounters the public reprobation, and lays himself open to impeachment. Now the family constitution lies at the foundation of all the forms of civil and Christian society. To be willingly ignorant, then, of the right mode of administering it, is to incur a high degree of criminality.

2. The paternal authority is to be perpetuated *by the maintenance of a wholesome example.* The example of the father is the mold into which the character of the son will naturally be delivered. How exact should it be! We should be content with nothing short of that resolution, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

3. *Authority should be tempered with tenderness, but not annihilated by indulgence.* "As a father pitieth his children." By that tender trait is the disposition of God himself illustrated. It may and ought to exist

even in the bosom of sterner mold. "And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The cares and vexations incident to the pursuits of men too often produce an irritable state of mind, that disqualifies them from rightly discharging parental duty. How can these tender plants withstand the storm of passion that sometimes bursts on their heads? "Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged." Correct them, but not in anger.

4. *The best instruction is the best government.* Happy is he who is accustomed to say, as he gathers round him the dear ones who constitute the home circle: "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding—for I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He TAUGHT me also"—He did not shift the responsibility from himself to my mother, but was willing to share it with her. Fathers, go and do likewise.

5. One of the noblest auxiliaries of parental duty is PRAYER. Even for poor Ishmael the father of the faithful prayed. "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!" How then did he wrestle for Isaac before and after his birth: how when, in view of the approaching sacrifice on Moriah, he sought the solitude of the forest, and, taking the lad with him, fervently prayed to God! How did Jacob wrestle with the angel of the covenant for his dear children in the hour of apprehended danger, even until the breaking of the day. Oh, how some of our pious and devoted fathers in the ministry and in the churches have agonized at the

eternal throne, until salvation was poured upon their families!

6. Authority should be so exercised as to secure *habitual obedience*. Then will obedience to God be more easily rendered. In proportion to the deeper deference naturally paid by children to the authority of a father, is the paternal responsibility increased. Were it proper, I could refer to living instances of distinguished parental success in bringing up children for God. Happy that missionary father, whose sons in beautiful succession are entering the ministry, and even the missionary field!



III.

The Everlasting Home.

I HAVE written of the home of the living and of the dead. But there is still another—the everlasting home. The former will cease to be. This never. It has engaged the thoughts of the great and the good in past times. Let it not be neglected by us. Not revelation only, but the course of nature teaches us, that we have “here no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” We now dwell in tents or tabernacles. True, men build houses to last long. They, however, do not expect to continue so long, much less to survive them. But “the house not made with hands”—that is the real and permanent house. Pause, ye busy men in the great marts of trade and commerce, and spend a few minutes with

me. Which way? Most of you probably have a home, which you love. So is it generally, my readers. It is said that in every thing there is a lesson. The world, too, is full of analogies. Types and symbols have been a favorite mode of teaching with Infinite Wisdom. Is there not something typical in Home? What are its visible realities?

The FATHER is the most conspicuous object there. A cluster of little dependent beings surrounds him. His smile lights up their joy. His frown spreads fear over the circle. This is a type. The best of all fathers presides in the everlasting home. His smile awakens the rapture of sainted bosoms. His frown—never does the shadow of a shade pass over that countenance.

Happy is the family that is blessed with a kind ELDER BROTHER. In his manly affection and cordial protection they of the household confide. Even his mother leans on him, who was cradled on her bosom. But in that exalted home of redeemed spirits there is an ELDER BROTHER who is not ashamed to call the meanest of the sanctified "his brethren." That same eye that wept over the miseries of humanity watches over the sleeping dust of every member of the family, and shall *see* all safely arriving at length at their eternal home.

An inward view of home shows a circle of CHILDREN of different ages and capacities, all the objects of parental love. If there is a weak and suffering one there, so much the more is it loved; so much the more does it evoke the mysterious tenderness of parental affection. Look into heaven, the final, everlasting home of the children of God. Are they not all the children of one Father? The first-born Son and Elder Brother died in

circumstances of peculiar agony to make that home a happy one to all the rest of the family. How happy must it be! Because it is so holy.

We see SERVANTS within the precincts of home. It is honorable to serve well. Christ called himself the servant of men. Who will be the servant in "the house not made with hands"? ANGELS—in the beautiful livery of holiness. What radiant splendors will hold the ravished eyes of all that shall be permitted to behold that scene! "Are they not ministering servants, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation"?

There are some families in which you will hear MUSIC from all the members. There sits the daughter, just budding into womanhood, gracefully touching the keys of the piano. Her brother discourses sweet music on the rich-toned flute. Another brother is skilled on another instrument. A sister lends the enchanting notes of her treble voice. Another in counter. A second brother sustains the performance by a voice of deep-toned base. What an addition to the charm of home is all this! That family need not wander abroad for sources of true happiness. But what is this to the music of heaven—of the "*family* named in heaven"—where all will sing, and it will be the music of the heart! Read John's descriptions of these heavenly scenes and sounds in the book of Revelation, ch. xiv. and xix.

Again, contemplate the FURNITURE, which is an appendage of home. In how costly a manner are some houses furnished! But that may be an evidence of pride or vanity. Not so in that other mansion. That

“pavement of sapphire”—those “walls of jasper”—those “precious stones”—it is the effort of language to express that which is inexpressible. Then what a table will be spread there! It is called “the marriage of the Lamb.” Again are the capabilities of language tasked in the description, until they stagger under the burden. Rev. xix. 6, 7.

Have you had *death* in your family? Has the shadow of the grim messenger darkened your doors? His presence is unknown in the everlasting home. Has the disobedience of a child imbittered the domestic cup? All will be obedient there. Has the rod of affliction rested upon your little circle? It is a stranger in the house of the blessed. Is there a short passage from the fireside to the grave? There is no such passage from the gate of heaven. Are there long absences of your loved ones here? They shall go no more out there. Whereas, the pious family on earth only worshiped morning and evening, there they shall never cease their worship and their praise. Time will have expired. The life of eternity will commence. Then shall we begin to understand the meaning of the word HOME.

IV.

Mother, Dear Mother.

A HOME and a mother, such as are contemplated in the constitution of God, are among our greatest earthly blessings, not to say important necessities. Of this truth, they who have enjoyed the double blessing need no demonstration. There are, indeed, orphans in the world—alas, many! and there are wanderers. There are those who have a home without a mother, and those who have a mother without a home; and, strange to say, there are those who have both homes and a mother, without having either in any becoming sense of the terms. Of this class was a very conspicuous poet, the light of whose genius shed its first extraordinary brightness on the opening years of this our eventful century, and who to the artificial eminence of noble birth super-added the higher dignity and honor of great intellectual powers, the immediate stamp of God on the soul of man. Before that signet we always bow with peculiar deference. I scarcely need to mention the name of BYRON, that child of genius and of song, that paradox of humanity, in whose brief life is embraced an age of instruction. The Muses and the Graces might have gathered round his cradle, and exulted at his birth, but the spirit of heaven-born piety was not there. No maternal prayer shed its benign, its consecrating influence over his helpless infancy. That gentle, effectual government, which springs from the firmness and earnestness of a sanctified maternal heart, was never

administered to his opening faculties. Having been once angrily reprimanded by his mother for soiling a new frock in which he had just been dressed, he flew into one of his "silent rages," seized the frock with both his hands, rent it from top to bottom, and stood in sullen silence, setting at defiance his mother and her wrath. That was the time for the solemn, sovereign, decisive exercise of that parental government even unto the severity of the wholesome rod, which God has established, and guarded with suitable sanctions; but it was fatally withheld, or rashly and capriciously, nay, violently administered, as when, at a subsequent period of his unblest childhood, "pokers and tongs were the missiles which Mrs. Byron preferred, and which she more than once sent resounding after her fugitive son. In the present instance, he was just in time to avoid a blow aimed at him with the former of these weapons, and to make a hasty escape to the house of a friend in the neighborhood!"* He fled from the fury of his mother, and took refuge in the haunts of London at the perilous age of eighteen. Thence writing to a friend, he calls her "my amiable Alecto!" A dreary morning, indeed, to his troubled life. An only son, the only heir of his house, in after years, when writing to his mother, he addressed her "Dear Madam." Cold and constrained indeed was the hand that wrote, like the heart that dictated that compellation. Yet when adversity had, in some measure, softened the asperity of his temper, and the talismanic power of distance and exile in a foreign land had created a longing even for his home, he rises to the expression, "Dear Mother," as if the

* Moore's Life.

filial principle would assert its authority, and claim the right of exercising itself on its natural object. And when the deeper influence of the grave came upon his proud and sullen spirit, it wrought a still further triumph over the prejudices of his childhood and the bitterness of his misanthropy. "My poor mother died yesterday," writes he to a friend, "and I am on my way from town to attend her to the family vault. I heard one day of her illness, and next of her death. * * I now feel the truth of Mr. Gray's observation, that we can only have *one* mother. Peace be with her." Ah! had she been a pious, praying, teaching mother, how she would have shaped that splendid mind to do a noble service to humanity, and to bring honor and glory to its bountiful Creator! How mournful that such exalted gifts should have been so prostituted; that the genius which could ascend to such heights of poetic grandeur, and which could so sound the crystal depths of beauty, and explore the fountains of imaginative thought, should have been, not only "unconsecrate to God," but desecrated to the service of Satan! Byron had no home; or if the name of one, it was without its endearing sanctities, without its enduring felicities. "To be happy at home," says Johnson, "is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labor tends." If this be a little too generic in its terms, it has an extensive application.

V.

The Family—Its Different Aspects.

BEAUTIFUL constitution! How manifestly marked by the Divine impress! "God setteth the solitary in families." Atheism would break up the happy organization. Religion approves and sanctifies it. The original home of the family was PARADISE. Holiness breathed its harmony over the scene. The sun shone for a brief space over a pure and guiltless pair. Not even the apostasy could destroy the immortal arrangement of the infinitely wise and benevolent God, or extinguish the sacred flame of domestic affection. It survives the ruins of the fall. It kindles into a more intense lustre at the very gates of the grave. Behold the grief of those affectionate children, whose MOTHER is consigned to the tomb. This precious heritage of man—the family—is even enriched and ennobled by an influence from the cross of Him in whom "all the *families* of the earth are blessed." What, then, are some of the aspects of interest and beauty in which this constitution of God may be contemplated?

We may view it as a little EMPIRE, the sovereignty of which is vested in the Father, and is derived from the fountain of all authority. It is indeed absolute, but lest the bosom of its possessor should grow rigid with the spirit of tyranny, *paternal affection* is planted there, to exert its benignant influence with all the steadiness

of an operative law, and keep in check the severer tendencies of the sterner sex. And lest this should not suffice, a softer bosom is at hand, ever ready to shed its gentle influence upon the authoritative government which it acknowledges. Responsibility being the inseparable concomitant of authority and power, and these being in an important sense absolute, how great, how complete that responsibility which presses upon the head of this government! Even when its weight is divided, how heavily it rests upon conscientious parents! How much more upon the widowed mother, whom death has bereaved of the strong arm on which she leaned for support, and the warm heart that beat responsive to her every affection! To this divinely constituted authority, unreserved obedience becomes a matter of filial obligation, that the ends of the family government may be answered. And that the obedience may be made easy, whether considered as exacted by the parent, or rendered by the child, the earliest years are appropriated to the formation of the habit; and how much of that precious, golden season is committed to the care and culture of the mother! Then have the statesmen, the warriors, the philosophers, or the divines been created. "The child is father to the man." Even at that early period have the destinies of nations been shaped and determined within the limits of this little empire, of which thou, Mother, art the queen regnant. Hence,

The family is a NURSERY. "Christian families are the nurseries of the Church on earth, as the Church is the nursery of the family in heaven." The idea is derived from a material process in nature, to which both

animals and plants are subjected. When we speak of nourishing, protecting, bringing to maturity the elements of our moral existence, the allusions are figurative, but perfectly intelligible, as well as impressive. The nursery, though most retired from public observation, is the most important place we occupy. It is the birthplace of the body and the mind. There, in the retirement of home, the intellectual powers are constructed. A train of associations commences, which extends itself through the whole of our future existence. Habitudes are formed, which mold the character of the future man. Impressions are engraven upon the ductile mind, which the tide of time will never obliterate. Then and there the seeds are sown which produce the harvest of life. Whether that harvest be of wheat or tares, holy angels wait and watch to behold! Mental philosophers have held that our character is formed and fixed ere our sixth year has expired. The opinion is of sufficient importance to arrest attention; for even if not strictly and universally true, it indicates an important truth. For the illustration of its truth, we might advert to individual examples. The history of the men of genius and power abounds with them. The stamp was received in the nursery. If we enter the walks of poetry, that department of human genius which exercises so potent an influence over the moral sensibilities, and through them over the actions of mankind, we shall find records of maternal influence brilliant and suggestive, striking and instructive. COWPER, for instance, with his own peculiar skill, embalms his recollections of the sanctity of home in such a way as to leave a fragrant impression

on the mind that feels the smallest congeniality with
“home-born delights.”

“My mother! when I learned that thou wert dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?”

Those were tears that flowed from the inmost fountains of the soul. Each one might represent a pearl of inestimable value, and were they strung together, might convey some faint idea of the worth of *such* maternal affection, as blessed the tender boyhood of the poet of the HEART and the HOME, whose strains so sweetly harmonize with the associations of domestic life, and spread the charms of a pure and beautiful poesy over all its interior scenery. How different was Byron's estimate of his mother! To him the reminiscences of the nursery seem to have been painful and oppressive. Hear him on the death of his mother: “Some curse hangs over me and mine. My mother lies a corpse in this house. One of my best friends is drowned in a ditch. What can I say, or think, or do?” Nothing, poor comfortless child of infidelity and despair, for

“No mother's tender care
Shielded your infant innocence with prayer.”

His splendid genius, prolific on so many other themes, never deigned a filial tribute to the remembrances of home. A few occasional scornful words of prose suffice to express his feelings toward her, who, in a paroxysm of passion, could hurl the tongs or the stool at her erring son. Hence the wretchedness of his own home, *from* which, reversing the order of those who seek true happiness, he fled, to become a wanderer and an adventurer. While genius, talent, taste, and superior

intellectual beauty were developed in him, the moral sense, the spirit of veneration, was sadly deficient. His pilgrimage through life was like one of his own dark and troubled dreams. Constrained by his remorseful feelings, he would sometimes resort to confession for relief, though it were confession without repentance.

"The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree

I planted; they have torn me, and I bleed.

I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed."

The family is a SCHOOL. The parent is the natural teacher. A good, devoted, praying mother is the best teacher in the world. The parental appointment is from God.—Deut. vi. 7. The mother of Dwight, supplying the lack occasioned by his father's immersion in business, diligently instructed her little Timothy in all right knowledge, and what a gift did Mary Dwight bestow on the Church of God! "Her school-room was the nursery," says his biographer, and "a great proportion of the instruction which he received before he arrived at the age of six years, was at home with his mother." Happy child, and happy, too, the child who can not only say: "I was tender, and only beloved in the sight of my mother," but can add: she "*taught* me also, and said unto me, Let thy heart retain my words: keep my commandments and live." Happy the father who can say to his children: "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding." Speak not of wealth, of rich legacies, of ample estates, of abundant profits. *This* merchandise is better than that of silver and gold. It is the wealth of knowledge, the legacy of wisdom, the inheritance of truth and righteousness. Oh, what prayer

and pains-taking are necessary on the part of parents to do that great work of EDUCATION, a work of which it may be truly said, that its comprehensiveness is seldom comprehended! Education entire—of the body—the mind—the imagination—the judgment—the moral faculties—the principles—the HEART, which is the seat and source of all that constitutes the final immortality of our being. Wide and sad is the neglect of this duty. How many thousands in this land are trained to a career of guilt and shame! It is by patient, repeated, long-continued strokes on the marble, that the sculptor eliminates at length the beautiful statue that seems almost to live and breathe. Consummate art and industry alone can reach the point of impressive excellence. The parent is the sculptor of souls. Every stroke is for immortality.



VI.

The Sabbath and the Family.

THAT was a happy thought of one of our great American divines to apply to the expression, *Laws of Nature*, that more scriptural and descriptive expression, *Ordinances of Heaven*. Some of these ordinances are applicable to the material, others to the moral world. Among the former may be reckoned the laws of gravitation and ascension; among the latter are comprehended all those laws or ordinances which relate to the

moral being of the intelligent creatures of God. In a world composed of beings whose nature is compounded of body and spirit, the ordinance of the family constitution is a necessary law. Equally necessary to the well-being of man is the ordinance of the SABBATH. It was "made for man." Here, then, we have two institutions, both necessary and beautiful, having their origin in the bosom of God; their synchronism with Creation itself; their objects parallel through all time; their period the end of all things earthly. On each of these ordinances is stamped the image of divine wisdom and benevolence; admirable means, adapted to a worthy and glorious end: love endeavoring to train the soul for a higher and holier sphere. In the well-ordered, sanctified family of earth we behold a type of the "whole family in heaven," of which God is the adored Father, and all beatified saints the affectionate and adoring children—united together by the golden bond of love, and bound to the mediatorial throne by the ties of an imperishable faith. In the institution of the Sabbath, and especially in its holy observance, we contemplate a current type of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and of the holy employments of heaven. Thus, even the sweetness, the beauty, the blessedness of the celestial state, are drawn down into the shadowy vale of our mortal existence by the heart of faith, which loves to antedate the triumphs of glory, and honor the pledges of a covenanting God in advance, by opening the soul to that fullness of joy which springs from his presence.

The foundation of all true happiness, whether of earth or heaven, is laid in the knowledge of God. For as the higher life of the soul is the main thing to be sought—

the interior spiritual existence being the chief proposal of heaven in its scheme for the redemption of man, it becomes our first duty to study the Eternal, to acquire "that which may be known of God," though Infinity has unfathomable depths, not to be sounded by our line. "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The business of a candidate for eternity is to be "increasing in the knowledge of God." Here he is met by the institution of the Sabbath, which shed its benignant light on the morning of creation, hallowing Paradise itself, and inspiring into the bosom of man a certain gladdening hope of the future. So, also, it meets every child of mortality, in lands blessed with the light of Christianity, at the threshold of his existence, and offers to conduct him to glory. This, indeed, is the blessed light which

'Streams from the depths of ages on mankind.'

What multitudes of the just and holy, now radiant in other spheres, have rejoiced to walk in that light! "I," saith Jehovah, "gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."—Ezek. xx. 12. Again, we hear the heavenly injunction, uttered with imposing solemnity: "HALLOW my Sabbaths, and they shall be, a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." But how could this command be obeyed without the kindred institution of the family, which is the constituted school of virtue, piety, and preparation for heaven? Little do we appreciate our mercies; we, to whom the Sabbath is a birthright; on whose cradled infancy it shed its precious, primal blessings;

whose ears first caught these soft accents from maternal lips, echoing the voice of God: "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," followed by that other admonition: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." We were thus watched, instructed, prayed for, wept over, that we might know God; and knowing, love him with all our heart, and mind, and might.

This was in the bosom of the family, and chiefly on the Sabbath. What tender recollections arise in the mind of one born to such an inheritance as this! How can we forget the authoritative paternal injunctions; the scarcely less powerful example of meek-eyed piety, as expressed in maternal deportment; the morning devotions; the early lessons; the sacred stillness of the day diffusing a mysterious charm over all; then, at the appointed hour, the church-going bell ringing out its cheerful tones, to call us to the house of God, or, perchance, giving forth its solemn toll for the dead!* These are impressive reminiscences, linking the Sabbath and the family in sweet and cordial union, while they remind us of the sanctity of the one and the preciousness of the other. Who would seek to impair the moral force of such a union? Infidelity attempted it, and drenched a nation in blood. Atheism sealed and sanctioned it with a deeper curse, and the gates of hell flew open to receive its victims. Never was that law, "settled in heaven forever," "Evil shall SLAY the wicked," more fearfully executed than on the regicides, the fratricides, and parricides of France, who, in that long paroxysm

* The old church-bell had this inscription:

"I to the church the living call,
And to the grave I summon all."

of voluntary insanity, at the close of the last century, sought to abolish the Sabbath, and to divorce the very rite of marriage itself from the humanity which it guarded. What a train of woes unutterable followed that explosion of human depravity! The vibrations of that tremendous shock are felt to this hour. "That abrogation of the Sabbath," says Chancellor Walworth, "was accompanied by a general corruption of morals, and even by the breaking up of the conjugal relation, under a law allowing an unlimited divorce, at the mere will of the parties; when, as the Abbé Grégoire states, upward of twenty thousand divorces were registered in the short space of eighteen months, and those in the city of Paris were nearly equal to the number of marriages."

Now, see the Pilgrim Puritans, keeping the Sabbath in the very sight of the shore, on which they would not land until the sacred hours were passed. And so they taught their families. And thus a conservative influence acted and reacted between these two institutions, consolidating the interests of society on an impregnable basis, and opening the way for the introduction of those higher blessings which are linked with the eternal destiny of the soul.

The Sabbath and the family! Beautiful conjunction! Through these graciously instituted means the very spirit of Heaven is conducted down to earth, and diffused through the domestic circle. The father of the family is offered the pledge of one day of rest, that he may devote his energies to training that family for heaven. The business of the nation pauses. The doors of the legislative halls are closed. The courts cease to try

cases. The visible wheels of government are arrested. Public offices are shut. Places of business are deserted. Common law pronounces the Sunday a *non dies* as to all civil purposes, thus confessing that it must be entirely devoted to God. A weight of care is at once lifted off the mind of him whom not even a creditor can then approach, except the greatest Creditor of all, God. Numerous facilities are presented for doing a great family work on that spiritual day, preparatory to the union and communion of the family of the "first-born," who shall enjoy the eternal Sabbath in glory. The children's secular studies are laid aside. The Bible succeeds. The feet of visitors are supposed not now to intrude. (Alas! for their frequent violations of the sanctity of the day.) A peculiar and impressive stillness pervades the house. It is the QUIETUDE OF THE SABBATH. It is the highest consecration of a happy home. Morning prayers and praise ascend to God from the domestic altar. Burns, the poet, confesses to the ineradicable impression made on his young heart by the ordinance of family worship. Its reminiscences inspired him to compose one of the finest specimens of that poetry which has given his name such exalted celebrity. Family worship in a cottage may be described in a single line:

"The saint, the father, and the husband prays."

Oh, New England!—land of the rock, the stream, the storm; of wooded hills and laughing valleys; of towering mountains and crystal lakes, mirroring in their soft bosoms those beauties that surround them in rich profusion!—keep thy Sabbaths, love them, cherish

them, and give them, along with the numerous offshoots of thy prolific family tree, to the emigrant hosts that are peopling that broad land toward the setting sun. And when he dips his disk on the first day of the week in the deep waters of the Pacific, let his retiring rays be to them the parting sign of a well-spent Sabbath. The family in its purity, and the Sabbath in its sanctity, shall, under the benediction of the Holy Paraclete, be the salvation of the land. We need more conscientious fathers, and wives that will be as guardian angels over their husbands, to keep them in the right way. A conductor informed his wife that he had been requested to go with the rail-cars on Sunday. She replied: "I take it for granted you do not intend to go." "If not," he rejoined, "I may lose my place. I have no other employment; the times are hard, and I have a family to support." His wife said: "I know it; but I hope you will not forget, that *if a man cannot support a family by keeping the Sabbath, he certainly cannot support them by breaking it.*" Nobly said, thou woman of faith and courage! "I think so myself," replied her husband, carried away by the fervor of his wife: "that was what I wanted, to see whether we think alike." He informed his employer that he should be sorry to lose his situation, but that he could not go with the mail on the Sabbath; that he *must* attend public worship, and go with his children to the Sabbath-school. This was his firm determination. The consequences he left with God. The result was, so honest and conscientious a man was retained, and he rose to a higher prosperity than would have accompanied the desecration of the Sabbath.

A young man, an acquaintance of the writer, was offered a handsome situation in a business house in New Orleans, if he would do Sabbath work. He declined, though without employment. A merchant hearing of the circumstance, said: "That is the man for me," and employed him at higher wages.

Two of the first lawyers in the country came to a friend of mine on a Saturday, and said: "We want you to print these briefs, so that we can have them on Monday morning." "I cannot do it, gentlemen." "Why?" "Because," he replied, "it would require Sunday work, and that I never allow to be done in my establishment." "But," said the advocates of the law, "it is a case of necessity, and if you will not do it, we must look elsewhere." "Very well, gentlemen," he replied, "that is your own responsibility; but you must excuse me from doing your work on the Sabbath."

Men that are accustomed to implicit deference cannot well bear opposition to their opinions and designs, and they retired somewhat irritated. *But they ever afterward gave him their custom.* Such is the secret respect inspired by a resolute adherence to principle. From the State of New York a gentleman writes to Dr. Edwards: "About thirty years ago, in a farming district in a neighboring county, were about ten families, with good farms and good prospects. But they followed their worldly business on the Sabbath, and brought up their children in the same way. A few days ago an aged relative, who has just visited the district, and who, thirty years ago, bought a farm there, on which his brother now resides, informed me that all those families have gone to destruction, and many of their descendants

are vagabonds. His brother, a Sabbath-keeper, has been greatly blessed in his estate and in his family, all his children being pious and prosperous." Oh, the inestimable blessing of the Sabbath to the family! The wealth of California is not to be laid in the balance against it. The glory of a nation is but shame without it. "In every Christian household," says Chalmers, "it will be found that the discipline of a well-ordered Sabbath is never forgotten amid the old lessons of a Christian education; and we appeal to every individual who now hears us, and who carries in his bosom the remembrance of a father's worth and a father's piety, if, on the coming round of the seventh day, an air of peculiar sacredness did not spread itself over that mansion where he drew his first breath, and was taught to repeat his infant hymn, and lisp his infant prayer."

"The Sabbath was made for man," to rest his body, to invigorate his intellect, to chasten his imagination, to give a wholesome exercise to his memory, to bow his will, to soften his heart; in a word, to sanctify the whole physical, intellectual, and moral man, and train the soul into a perfect congeniality with celestial thoughts and glories. Man needs it as a husband, to accomplish the design of God in investing him with that tender relation. Man needs it as a father, in order to fulfill the solemn obligations under which he lies to his children. Woman needs it as a wife, to fill up the measure of her fidelity to her husband. Woman needs it as a mother, that she may avail herself of its mighty auxiliary influences in fitting her children for usefulness on earth, and for happiness in heaven. Over all the conditions and relations of domestic life, the moral sunlight of the Sab-

bath sheds its hallowed, halcyon influence, to cheer our hearts, lighten our burdens, and elevate our anticipations to a state of sinless perfection and endless fruition. Man, as a laboring being, toiling for his family, must have the weekly rest, or break down under the burden. Man, as invested with earthly power, conducting the operations and engrossed with the cares of government, needs the Sabbath to preserve him from becoming a wreck. "Oh, what a blessed day," said Wilberforce, "is the Sabbath, interposed between the waves of worldly business, like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan! I can truly declare that the Sabbath has been to me INVALUABLE."

"What became of poor Romilly," he adds, "who would not consent to give up Sunday consultations?" He lost his reason, and terminated his own life. "Poor Castlereagh," observed the same statesman, "he was certainly deranged, the effect probably of continued wear of mind. The strong impression on my mind is, that it is the effect of the *non-observance of the Sabbath*, both as to abstracting from politics, and from the constant recurring of the same reflections."

Not to himself alone does the violation of the law of God by a father bring sorrow and ruin. His family, dearer to him than himself, must inevitably suffer from the same cause. Father, mother, do you teach and train your children to keep the Sabbath holy? Alas! I seem even now to hear the sobs of a mother, lamenting her lost child, her darling boy, who, unrestrained by parental authority, had wandered away from home on the Sabbath, and fallen into the river, whence he was taken a breathless corpse, and brought home to that mother.

Not by the most impassioned kisses can that breath be restored. That voice will never again speak on earth. Never will that ear again hear the injunction, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." It is sealed in death!



VII.

My First Affliction.

I HAD heard often of the grief of parents at the loss of children. I thought I sympathized with the afflicted, and so I did to a certain extent. I never could see a fond mother bend over the dead form of her beloved child without desiring to weep with her—but, ah! with that grief a stranger intermeddled not. To me there was always something affecting in the deep and solemn dignity of death, and in the speechless eloquence of the grave. Living for the most part of my youth within the sound of the sweet village bell of New England, nothing could be more solemn than its knell, when tolling at the occasional burial of an inhabitant. But, oh, how different the sound when it was for *my child*! Little Mary had wound her silvery cords round and round my heart. From the time of her birth she gradually insinuated herself into the bosom of parental affection, until no child seemed so tender, so lovely, so triumphant over a father's heart. How mysterious the growth of attachment! It is the work of God, that he may fulfill his purpose! What a chaos

of *dissecta membra* would the world present without it! So little Mary lived for me, and I—too much for her. At table she sat next me—abroad she walked with me—at church she sat by my side—at night she lay in my bosom—she loved me with the pure simplicity of a child, and with the enthusiastic ardor of a daughter; yes, a *daughter*. Let no father impatiently long for *sons*. He may please himself with the ideas of boldness and masculine energy, and moral or martial achievement, but ten to one he will meet with little else than forwardness, recklessness, imperiousness, ingratitude. “Father, *give* me the portion that falleth to me,” was the imperious demand of the profligate prodigal, who had been indulged from his childhood. This case is the representative of thousands. The painter that drew that portrait, painted for all posterity. But the daughter—she clings, like the rose-leaf around the stem, to the parent home, and the paternal heart; she watches the approving smile, and deprecates the slightest shade on the brow; she wanders not on forbidden pleasure-grounds; wrings not the hearts at home with her doubtful midnight absence; wrecks not the hopes to which early promise had given birth, nor paralyzes the soul that dotes upon this its chosen object. Wherever the son may wander in search of fortune or pleasure, there is the daughter, within the sacred temple of home, the vestal virgin of its innermost sanctuary, keeping alive the flame of domestic affection, and blessing that existence of which she is herself a part. As my youngest cherub threw her arms around my neck, and breathed into my ear, “*Dear father,*” could I have imagined that very night would

witness her little form struggling with a fierce disease? But so it was. Ah, father! fond, doting father! you think that child is yours. A few rosy summers have passed over its head. Its cheeks are in full bloom—her eye, gay with childhood's innocent joys, looks cheerily and confidingly into your own delighted face—her step bounds over the garden path, and in her little hand she brings you a bunch of flowers. This is happiness too exquisite for Death to permit. It was mine. In one month it was mine. In the next it was all buried in the depths of the grave that opened to receive the precious form of my Mary. I then learned a lesson, of which I had not before a suitable conception, that I do not own any thing in the creation of God. I had closed the dying eyes of a beloved mother—and much I loved her—no child could love more—but a lingering consumption, after detaining her a long time in view of the promised land, at length let her go with joy to take full possession. I had buried a beloved sister, who, under a similar course of protracted discipline, was ripened for her heavenly rest; but *this* was my *first affliction*.

Every parent understands me. Every father knows I speak the truth. There is not on earth a tie so peculiar, so mysterious, so inexpressible. Ten thousand infinitely minute fibers are sundered at that bold stroke of Death. The breaking of a million of arteries would not cause such a flow. The actual loss is not, indeed, like that of losing a conjugal partner, but the feeling, the emotion, the complexity of grief, is too intense to be surpassed. A part of both of yourselves dies! the pledge of your affection—the joy of your soul—the

concentrating point of your united love is snatched away, and an appalling vacancy is created in the soul. The strength of a parent's love is seen in its appropriate evidence, while life lasts—in the anxious look—the eager inquiry—the restlessness of the heart—the assiduity of attention—the sleepless vigilance. Oh, how the Mother watched over that child! Every power, faculty, and appetite of the system seemed to pay its tribute to the impending danger. When nature was exhausted, the mother would lie on the bed in a vain effort to sleep; her soft and suppressed groans re-echoing through the silence of midnight the afflicting groans of the little sufferer. To see a child, whose powers of moral agency have not yet been developed, or who can have no suitable sense of responsibility, writhing under the scourge of a relentless disease—looking at you most imploringly for that help which you can no more give than create a world—this is as humiliating as it is heart-rending—you are the cause of those sufferings—you could entail, but you cannot relieve. You could be the means of a sinful, painful existence, but could not impart holiness to that existence.

In the case of my sweet Mary, hope clung to the last relic of probability of recovery—nay, forced itself an existence in the very mouth of despair, and even tried to rally its expiring energies over her breathless corpse. After four weeks' suffering, the last night came:—Mary requested *me* to lie by her side that night, as if to give me some consolation for the approaching stroke of Death—and, ere the morning dawned, her spirit had fled! That indeed was the opening of a new scene in the hurried drama which was passing before me. It was

my first affliction. I could write a volume on its impressions and its tendencies, but it would weary.

In a lovely grave, in a romantic situation, repose the remains of my cherished one, secure alike from present suffering and the danger of future ills. That spot I love to visit, and to repeat, in Kirke White's touching lines :

" Securely laid
In this thy last retreat,
Unheeded o'er thy silent dust
The storms of life shall beat."

And another day (which the Father hath in his own power) shall gather me and my loved family in one redeemed circle, where tears and trials forever cease, and love and joy fill every heart.



VIII.

The Grave of my Daughter.

THE sweet month has again returned—the first of the summer months—which will ever be remembered by me as the season when my cherished one sickened and died. If not a father, reader, you may pass on to the next article, though I should delight to detain you near my little daughter's grave for a few moments. But if the pulse of parental love has ever had vitality in your bosom, I need not apologize. My feelings, my sympathies, my joys, my sorrows, are yours. Two years have

now elapsed since that day when death first entered my family. The whole scene rushes vividly before the mind, showing how deep and strong was the impression then made. The first attack of the insidious disease—the promise of recovery—then the relapse—the incessant anxieties—the unsleeping vigils—the anguish of the helpless sufferer—her sweet submission to the will of God—her triumph over death and the grave—in a word, the succession of emotions, that, like wave after wave, swept across our bosoms, while life hung in fearful uncertainty—all these are engraven as with the point of a diamond on the tablet of memory. Nor would we erase them. It is not a mere dream of the poet's imagination, that there is "luxury in grief." This idea is true to nature. Not indeed that the pain is not intense when those chords of the heart are struck, which are the very seat of the most exquisite sensibility, but that pain is mellowed and hallowed by some mysterious influence, flowing from the inexhaustible fountain of infinite benevolence. I never knew a serious and devout heart, that would have wished its chastisements in any other shape than that conceived by Divine Wisdom. The thorn is indeed there, but so is the fragrant rose. If the one pierces, the other soothes.

"The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

When once the mind has surmounted the difficulties that press upon it, it acts with increased vigor and a more enlarged freedom. At first the attention becomes riveted to the mass of breathless clay. With a too intense, but pardonable fondness, it clings, as Doddridge

tenderly expresses it, to "the darling dust." *There* is the image of your child; and what a ray of comfort darts across the deep sorrow of the soul, when you can see and say, or hear others say, "*She looks natural!*" Not long will that be true. Those lips, once instinct with the warm coloring of life, are now cold and colorless. Would they would remain ever so! But no, they must decay, and be hidden in the dust. The cheek that was often pressed to yours in the ardor of filial love, has now on it only the marble chill of death. Oh, how the heart writhes in a paroxysm of agony, when the truth and reality of the thing are felt! Would it were literal marble, that the heart might love *that*; but no, the decay of the grave must deform and dissolve the fair clay. The slumberer will not, indeed, be sensible to this process, but the living know it. The father knows that the cherished form of his child molds in the grave. The mother knows that the loved one, whom she bore, and nursed, and fondled, is now buried out of her sight. Such is the sad necessity of death! And it is on these subjects that the mind is too prone to dwell. The heart lingers too much round these visible scenes. "She goeth to the grave to weep there." Oh, why did she not *look up*? Contemplations that are bounded only by the limits of the grave are less fitted to minister consolation to affliction than nutriment to sorrow, even that "sorrow of the world that worketh death." If the soul, in the tumult of its grief, will but pause a moment and listen, it will soon hear a voice saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never

die." This changes the entire scene. It is no more *sight*, but *faith*. What a world of wonders does faith unfold to the view! *Now*, we can see the ransomed spirit, not as it is oppressed with doubt and agonized with suffering, but spreading the unclogged wings of its Love, and expatiating with rapture amid scenes of heavenly beauty and songs of seraphic melody. Who would be so cruel as to call that spirit back, again to be soiled with the dust of earth; to re-endure its sorrows; to be again endangered by its fascinations; flattered with its illusions; distracted with its cares, and deceived by its promises! Is it not better for the soul to find "its long-sought rest!"—to be disrobed of its earthly mantle; to enter the pure and perfect society of the blessed; to dwell where Holiness holds its court; where angels tune their harps; where the redeemed swell the high anthem of praise to the exalted LAMB; where it will never be interrupted in that worship, which was the original privilege and the delicious employment of the soul, "created in the image of God!"

Requiescat in pace.

Here, then, is the dust of my child. Many a sweet spring shall put forth its blossoms in sight of this early grave, but my little flower will remain crushed within its dark bosom. Many a gay summer will shed its beauty around the scene, and the bright colors of Autumn will illumine yonder woodlands, but in this world my loved one will never smile again! Oh, the inexorable despotism of death! Oh, the iron-hearted sovereignty of the grave! The thought is almost insupportable. But again religion teaches us to lift our eyes

from the ashes of the dead to the region of pure, ethereal existence, of spiritual love, of unsullied holiness, and uninterrupted happiness. Nay, this must be the very object of dispensations like these, to summon the mind to the contemplation of its superior good, and to attract the heart toward the center of every pure affection—the supreme object of love and adoration to every holy being. Then let these things come in their time. They come not by chance. Inspiration eloquently teaches us that they “come not forth of the dust, nor spring out of the ground.” It tells us that “Life is a vapor.” How many parents can attest it!

“She came and passed. Can we forget
How we, whose hearts had hailed her birth,
Ere four autumnal suns had set,
Consigned her to her Mother Earth!
Joys and their memory pass away,
But griefs are deeper plowed than they!”

Heaven will equalize all! The soul that breathes its aspirations for such perfection can never receive amiss what Heaven sends.



IX.

A Funeral in the Country.

THIS is one of the necessities of mortal man. No day, no hour is without its funeral. So common is it in the experience of man, that he lets it pass, and thinks no more of it. Especially does this heartlessness exist in

the city. They are less careless and unthoughtful in the country. Have you spent a summer in a New England valley, along whose rich sides the tones of the Sabbath-bell are heard to reverberate at the church-going hour? But why is the bell tolling suddenly on the ear in the middle of the week, at an unusual hour of the day, perhaps early in the morning, or at the going down of the sun, as if matins or vespers were about to be solemnized in the land of the Puritans? Ah! it is not for the living, but for the dead. It does not imperatively call to prayers for the dead, but announces the simple, solemn fact, that some one, perhaps known to all—has died! But is it a tender child or a strong man? Has blooming youth or hoary age fallen? Wait a few moments, till the measured and melancholy stroke shall cease. Now, after a solemn pause, while all ears are attent, may be heard a number of strokes in rapid succession. There may be six; there may be twenty; there may be forty, or seventy. If the first, childhood has received its last earthly repose. If the second, a young person is no more. If the third, middle age is soon to be shrouded for the grave. If the last, some old inhabitant has at length completed the weary journey of life. Thus the village bell gives notice that the villagers must prepare for a funeral. Could words or forms speak like this to the living?

The crowded city could not hear such an admonition. And yet, amid all the business and bustle of the city, every day some hearts are breaking. Maternal love is weeping over the image of departed infancy. I say image, for the infant's mind—the soul—is not there. Not colder, though more enduring, is the marble statue

itself. Yet even to the lifeless statue of her child does she cling with undying affection. And ere that lid, which must close on us all, is fastened down, how many warm kisses does she impress on the pale clay! To say that I respect such an expression of maternal affection, would be stoical. I *love* to see it; not for the agony of that parting moment, but for the beautiful development of an affection of which God is the author, and for the relief which it brings to a burdened heart—the greater if tears can flow, impearling the cheek of infancy. Yes, mother, restrain not the tenderness of a heart which can only be relieved by opening its secret and mysterious channels, and letting the tide of emotion flow through them.

Nor, when the picture is reversed, does the scene less strongly grasp the chords of sympathy in the heart. I have seen the deep stillness of the funeral agitated by the sobs of a motherless child, and heard him break forth in the most natural exclamations of filial love, at that moment so agonizing to bereaved survivors, when the coffin that incloses the precious treasure sinks into the grave. “I can’t go away—I can’t go away,” cried a little girl erewhile, as the grave was receiving its charge, and depriving her forever of her natural guardian on earth. She could not leave the spot. “Let me be buried with my mother,” repeatedly begged a little boy, who could scarcely believe they would be so cruel as to separate her from him, and never again permit him to see that lovely face, and lay his head on that fond bosom, the dearest to him on earth.

When I have witnessed these things—when I have heard the artless, but heart-penetrating questions asked

by children, while the mournful preparations for the funeral engaged the attention of these argus-eyed observers, I have been ready to exclaim, Oh Sin! what hast thou done! Thou hast rudely, ruthlessly violated the most sacred affections of humanity. Sighs and groans are the aliment of thy life. The tears and trials of the afflicted attend thy pathway through this wilderness. No wonder that Divine inspiration personifies thee as a remorseless tyrant, or that he who drank so deeply of the spirit of the sacred muse, the poet of Paradise, the sublime painter of heaven's joys and hell's terrors and tortures, should sketch such pictures of thee, Oh Sin, which "hath reigned unto death." An angel could not hold such a pencil. It must be the hand of one who has himself sinned or been sinned against. Thus has fallen man been compelled to write his own history, and lay bare the anatomy of his own heart. And his doom on earth is to witness funerals till his own shall be attended, "waiting all the days of his appointed time till his change come."

As there never was a man who had a keener relish for domestic life, with its "home-born delights," than Cowper, so none could describe them with superior skill and beauty. He fondly loved his mother, as none could doubt who ever read his poetry. How did his imagination kindle when his cousin, Ann B——, presented him with a picture of his departed mother!

"My mother, when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?

* * * * *

I heard the bell tolled on thy funeral day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away;

And turning from my nursery window, drew
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu.
 But was it such? It was. Where thou art gone,
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
 The parting words shall pass my lips no more!
 * * * * The record fair
 That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,*
 Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced:
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
 That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid."

Thus image after image, simple and natural, and continually associated with home, is brought forth, the offspring of the memory and the imagination united, all for a serious and valuable purpose. They seem copies from nature rather than inventions of art, and to spring from the heart rather than the fancy; nor did he pen a line which, "dying, he could wish to blot." At length his own funeral was attended, and, reader, so will be that of yours and mine!

X.

Congressional Cemetery.

"Remember me—oh! pass not thou my grave,
 Without one thought whose relics there recline.
 The only pang my bosom dare not brave,
 Would be to find forgetfulness in thine."

If all men do not aspire to an illustrious immortality, all desire to be remembered, at least by a

* In the sanctuary of home.

chosen few. The utter extinction of all thoughts in regard to us may perhaps be considered the next bitter thing to annihilation itself, on which few can reflect with composure. When Byron wrote the lines quoted above, which constitute a part of the exquisite song of Medora in the Corsair, he obeyed the natural law of impassioned feeling as a poet, and betrayed the natural sense of immortality as a man, in direct contradiction to sentiments that escaped him in those inauspicious moments when the dark cloud of skepticism cast its gloomy shadow over his genius. Then would he prate of the "first dark day of *nothingness*," as if he were not ashamed of the creed of the atheist, who would blot the sun from the moral sky, and bring back the reign of ancient night; in fact, a scene of wild ruin and terrific chaos, well described in his celebrated "Dream." Too truly he delineates his own experience, when, in one of those moods, he writes :

"I have thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy, boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of fantasy and flame."

But while we cannot subscribe to the doctrine of Chateaubriand, that the existence of grave-yards, and our veneration for tombs, are convincing arguments for the truth of Christianity—a doctrine for which he was indebted rather to the ardor of his imagination than to the soundness of his reasoning powers—we own that the influence emanating from the place of sepulture is by no means small; that the solemn shades of the burial-ground are congenial with a certain class of emotions natural to the human breast, and that there are

voices thence which speak in impressive tones, for they seem to come from the very borders of the spirit-land.

It was in those mysterious regions that the genius of Mrs. Hemans seemed most at home, and the passionate tenderness of her heart breathed forth with melancholy energy, as she recalled the dim and shadowy forms of the past, or gazed with intensity of imagination into the future. Hence the interest which some minds take in consecrated grounds—in *God's acre*—as the burial-place has been sententiously termed. Of those who have committed a friend to the last repose, there are few indeed who have not a secret sympathy for the spirit of the place. Hence the popularity of those cemeteries which are increasing in the land. Hence the interesting spectacle of the living visiting the dead in such numbers. Hence the efforts of the genius of sculpture to resist the extinguishing influences of Death, and to attempt monuments of triumph even on the bosom of the grave. The name is happy—it is significant. CEMETERY, or sleeping-place! Here is Greek etymology and Greek philosophy—of the imagination, for the Greeks were a romantic and imaginative people, and invested all the forms of nature and art with ideal life, or linked to them some beautiful image to stir and delight the mind.

A visit to the Congressional burial-ground at Washington now constitutes a part of the gratification of strangers coming to the capital. It is not, indeed, a Westminster Abbey, but to an American, as an American, it is a more interesting spot, for there molder the bones of some of our best and bravest.

The location is fine. It is near the banks of the

Anacostia, some distance below the point where it leaves the main channel of the Potomac, and commands a lovely view of the circumjacent country. The pencil of Wordsworth would eagerly catch the salient points of this picture, and arrange them on the canvas with striking effect. In the softer states of the atmosphere, when the "winds are pillowed on the waves," the deep bosom of the placid river may be seen to reflect the features of the glowing landscape spread out on its border. Still more enchanting is the aspect of the southern sky, when, after the "long sunny lapse of a bright summer's day," the sun has descended to "bathe his fiery axle" in the western waters, leaving the tints of his many-colored pictures on the face of the firmament, and regaling the sense of beauty in man with exquisite pleasure. This, too, is a sequestered place. The spirit of solitude dwells here. In my various visits to it, I have seldom seen any one there.

Better is the opportunity of conversing with the dead. What, then, is the meaning of that tall pyramidal monument of almost Parian marble, on which may be seen, in *bas-relief*, the striking head of some American statesman? It is among the first to meet the eye as you enter these solitary walks and solemn shades. It covers the remains of George Clinton, New York's noble son, who, in the infancy of the republic, sat in the chair of the American Senate.

Near it is the monument of Massachusetts' venerable statesman, Elbridge Gerry, who occupied the same chair, and who died on his way to the Senate-chamber to discharge his official duties, saying, "If a man had but one day to live, he should devote that to his country." They

lived long and well for their generation and country, and in death they are not divided. Time, whose chief prerogative it is to wear out and destroy, seems to confirm and hallow the immortality of such names.

A little further on, you will find the grave of the accomplished Pinkney, the pride and boast of Maryland, who fell in a moment, as if pierced by some death-winged weapon on the battle-field. He was all life, elasticity, power, vivacity. The whole man, physical, intellectual, moral, and imaginative, contributed to his vehement and glowing eloquence, making him literally an *eloquent man*. The deep fountain of enthusiasm was in him, and it must pour itself forth, not alone in the presence of the popular or the deliberative assembly, but before the judicial bench, where cool and quiet argument would seem to be the only thing in demand. Yet some men must be enthusiastic even in argument. The grave has quenched all. That tongue is here turned to dust. It is speechless. The wand of the enchanter, broken by the hand of Death, is buried in this tomb.

Pass on, and behold the neighboring mound. More than thirty years have the mortal remains of the accomplished Burrill, of Rhode Island, been moldering here. An American Senator fills this niche in the subterranean mansion. His budding fame was nipped by the frosty hand of death, and his place given to another. Yonder lies another Senator, but he shall be nameless, for he fell a victim to the prime minister of Death—intemperance. In vain did his kind-hearted physician warn him of the fatal consequences of his continuing to indulge in the inebriating cup. He looked upon it. He beheld the fascinating sparkle. He saw the coiled

adder, as it lay at the bottom of that cup, and the tooth of the serpent that lurked therein, and deliberately consented to be stung and bitten even unto death. Nor is this the only instance. Give tongues to many of the graves around me, and what a wail of lamentation would ascend from their depths into the ears of the living—what warning voices would fill the air with their mournful sounds!

Look at this grave on which the turf lies so compactly. Who is its tenant? A singular man he was; sometimes a legislator, spouting for his constituents; anon, a general, issuing magniloquent proclamations on the frontiers of his country, and depending for such immortality as he possesses, rather on these than on feats of arms; anon, retiring into theological studies, and affecting to explain the most profound, mysterious, and inexplicable book of the sacred canon, a task from which the most learned theologians have shrunk in despair. Ah! how many live and die without understanding either their gifts or their deficiencies!

Turning from this contemplation, the attention is arrested by the white monument of a representative, who suddenly expired in his place on the floor of the House of Representatives in the midst of a conflict of feeling—a very storm of emotion, raised by the breath of calumny or of satire, too intolerable for his sensitive nature. Thou art calm now! The sting of satire or of slander cannot pierce the bosom of the grave. How deep its slumber! How passionless its repose!

“How peaceful and how powerful is the grave!”

“After life’s fitful fever,” man sleeps the sleep that “knows no waking,” till the resurrection trumpet shall

utter its voice through the earth, to be reverberated from all the regions of death, to be obeyed with equal alacrity by the prince and the peasant, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the bond and the free, the righteous and the wicked. Then shall the reign of *retribution* commence, and the age of masks eternally cease.

Here, too, lies another member, whose breadth of intellect and of frame was conspicuous; eminent in law and in legislation, yet a slave to the alcoholic passion, in the indulgence of which his strong mind was prostrated with his body, and to this premature ruin did he come. Drop a tear, and go on.

Not far from him reposes one who in a dark night walked off the wharf, and was drowned in the Potomac. Truly, "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." As in man's moral history it so often occurs, so in this case, that one step was fatal and irretrievable.

Walk this way, and you will find the remains of Gov. Trimble, of Ohio, which have been moldering here some thirty-four years, while his State has been adding hundreds of thousands to her population. Could he be permitted to leave his cold rest, and revisit the theater of his political life; could he now survey the great West, how would he be astonished at the celerity, as well as charmed with the dignity, with which the march of empire westward has been maintained, while he has slumbered in that spot! Of how little consequence is the perpetuation of the life of one man in the estimate of great interlinked events, and in the progress of kingdoms and republics! What miracles are wrought in this country in a quarter of a century! How few of

our flaming politicians will be remembered a little while hence!

But what broken shaft is that towering in the distance, as you look toward the southwest? It is the marble that commemorates the name and deeds of Brown, the celebrated major-general, whose genius appeared at the critical period of the war of 1812, to restore the failing fortunes of the American arms, and reassure the sinking courage of the land. How brilliant was the lustre that encircled his name! Yet how little of it escapes the edacious tomb! By sudden martial achievements he rose to the head of the army. Deep now is the sleep of the hero. No sound of the trumpet, no roll of the drum can "wake him to glory again." More recent is the dust of his compeer in arms and military successor—Macomb—who achieved on the banks of the Saranac a name which posterity will not willingly let altogether die.

Let us now pass round to another point, and dwell a moment on the memory of an eminent, I may say an illustrious civilian, whose clay is beneath our feet. I mean William Wirt, one of America's noblest sons; urbane as a gentleman; kind and amiable as a friend; of the first order of intellect; endowed with an imagination captivating even to enchantment, yet on fitting occasions restrained by a finished critical taste and judgment; learned in the law, the delight of judges, the admiration of advocates, and a tower of strength to clients. Can it be that the noble form, which so often stood in majesty before the supreme bench, lies here a heap of dust? Is that countenance of manly beauty, which glowed with the expression of blended benevolence, intelligence, and energy, now an unsightly ruin

beneath this clod? The hand that traced those inimitable pictures in the British Spy, and painted in gorgeous colors the burning eloquence of Henry, is it but a crumbling skeleton? Such is the lot of man; yet, while talent can command respect, genius awaken admiration, eloquence inspire enthusiasm, or the moral virtues elicit the heartfelt tribute of praise, the memory of such a man will endure, more imperishable than the tomb which embraces his mortal remains, or the marble that marks the spot where they repose.

Here, also, may be found the sailor's grave, the quiet port where he has cast his last earthly anchor, after the storms and strifes of the sea are no more. Rodgers, Tingey, Kennon, and others, each of whom went forth, "the monarch of the peopled deck," have struck their flag to the common conqueror, and here lie his passive prisoners. No more will the broad pennant, the symbol of command, be for them hoisted over the gallant ship. No more do they feel any interest in

"The armaments which thunder-strike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals—
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay-creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war!"

No, but other spirits arise to trace ambition's dangerous path, and find its termination in the hollow tomb. War especially wakes up the bold, martial, and sanguinary passions of men, while it blunts the moral sensibilities, and multiplies a hundred-fold the triumphs of death, and the victories of the grave.

But what is this unique-looking monument, that amid

the surrounding multitude seems an isolated object? It covers the dust of Pushmataha, the Indian chief, who died among the white men, far from his native forests and sympathetic warriors. He was the white man's friend, and the white man honored him with an extraordinary sepulchral ceremonial, and a handsome monument. To the darkened mind of this poor Indian, the highest evidence of posthumous honor was to be saluted with the thunder of the "big guns," amid whose sublime reverberations his soul would be wafted to those islands of the blest, where the spirits of his fathers wandered at large, enjoying the chase or the feast. Here, then, lies the moldering Indian, a kind of representative, amid this diversified throng, of that wild and interesting race, that have been swept from the Atlantic shores, and from the Alleghanian regions, by the resistless tide of civilization, sparing only those beautiful names that will flow with our native streams to the end of time, or cling to the everlasting mountains, as they tower to meet the face of the sky, or greet the first rays of the gorgeous sun as he rises from his ocean-bed to fill the earth with his glory. The Indian is gone. Only romantic names and wild legends remain. The race itself is entombed—some remnants excepted. But the page of retributive justice has not yet been unfolded to man. The tribunal of appeals—the final court of review is yet to hold its sittings. To that court men are daily assembling. The dead beneath me—the living around me will all be there.

And here amid this row of vaults is the spacious central tomb, that may be called the outer court of Death, for the dead make their first entrance here. It

was in this chamber they laid the lamented Harrison, amid the solemn reverence and heartfelt grief of thousands, who beheld the scene of the never-to-be-forgotten April 8th, 1841. The banks of the Ohio have received those precious relics, and a nation's love guards them.

Again, I saw others of exalted, but less illustrious rank and character, enter the same solemn portals, attended by their living friends and compeers, who would gladly have reanimated their dust; but, though they might move nations and create empires, they could not reverse the dread law of Heaven, which annexes its sanction of *irrevocable*, as well as its appointment of *inevitable*, to the last hour of our mortal life. Upshur, Gilmer, Kennon, and Gardner, all entered in silence that vestibule of the sepulchral mansion, and were laid to their dreamless rest.

The Egyptians, who believed that the soul dwelt with the body in a state of repose, naturally sought by skillful and assiduous arts to preserve the latter, and, committing the treasure to the catacomb or the pyramid, attempted, not without a degree of success, to resist the progress of time and the process of decay. Christianity teaches a loftier sentiment—a more spiritual doctrine, when she sublimely declares that Jesus Christ “abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel.”

In vain do we question the grave. The voice of Revelation alone can satisfy the anxieties of the soul touching its own destiny. He who, standing by the tomb of a friend, said, “I am the resurrection and the life,” can adequately assure us in reference to the reunion of the dissevered body and spirit, and the exist-

ence of man in the endless future. He alone can tell us how those who have borne the image of the earthly shall bear the image of the heavenly, and how a glory can be shed even on these mortal ruins, such as Paradise itself never knew, from the hour when the justice of Heaven hung in mid air above its gate the cherubic sword of flame that guarded the tree of life from the intrusion of wicked men and demons.

"The *soul*, of origin divine
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere may shine
A star of day.

The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky ;
The *soul*, immortal as its sire,
Shall *never die*."

XI.

The Dead of the Princeton.

It was in the winter of 1844, when the ice had made with unusual thickness in the Potomac, that, on a cold day in the early part of February, the steamer Princeton might have been seen pushing her way through the frozen stream like a thing of life, and at length, having passed Alexandria, coming to anchor at a point about half way between that city and the U. S. Arsenal, situated near the eastern branch of the Potomac called the

Anacostia River. Here she lay some days in quiet repose, until the ice had so far loosened in the river as to permit her to move with comfort and facility in the element which she seemed proudly to adorn. Without sails, with no apparent paddles, no visible motive power, she glided up and down the stream, indifferent to wind or tide, as if endowed with some vital principle within that defied the resistance of all ordinary obstacles, nor even accepted aid from human hands. One could hardly help imagining that had DARWIN been lingering along those shores and seen that sight, his soul would have kindled into rapture with the consciousness that the airy fancies of his prophetic muse had become visible, palpable realities; that the genius of the philosopher and the artisan had crowned the dream of the poet with its own regal immortality. For some days the gay steamer disported herself in the bright waters of the Potomac, now running down to Fort Washington on the Maryland side, whose frowning battlements command the channel of the river some miles below Alexandria; then descending to Mount Vernon, to view the spot consecrated to the repose of the Father of his Country; discharging at times her enormous ordnance, whose thunders shook the surrounding forests and reverberated in multiplied echoes from the distant hills; while occasionally the "Peacemaker" let fly a ponderous ball that tore up the earth in its passage, or rent in pieces the trees with a fearful crash, all demonstrative of the inventive ability of man to convert the inert materials around him into the elements of terror and destruction, too soon, alas! to recoil with terrific energy on himself.

Occasionally the Princeton was visited by members of Congress and other official characters; also by visitors to the capital, and by ladies, who constitute an important feature in Winter "Life at Washington." The charm of their presence or their proximity is quite necessary to the progress either of pleasure or of politics.

Captain Stockton was proud of his ship, confident that he had invested her with a power which would render her not only formidable, but irresistible, and pleased to exhibit her fine proportions, her perfect internal arrangements, and in general that completeness of appointment which rendered her an ornament to the American navy and a dangerous antagonist to her foes.

The beautiful and complex machinery which embraced the power of propulsion, though submerged and accessible only by winding and difficult passages, was the admiration of all who descended to view it. It was an additional instance of the constantly augmenting triumphs of art and genius; an evidence of the many ramifications which by a law of mind and matter seem to spring out of one grand principle of discovery. There was the concentration of her muscular energies, and there was the illustration of the subjection of matter to mind. But the great objects of observation were those two monster guns on deck, in comparison with which the other portions of her armament seemed like a child's playthings.

They seemed rather to be the weapons of giants than the lawful and suitable instruments of beings no larger than men. They seemed unmanageable by man's puny

arm. They were, moreover, significantly "christened"—"*Oregon*" and "*Peacemaker*." And if there was a little of the *brag* in one name, and something of a contradiction in terms in the other, it might even be pardoned to the spirit of liberty and to "Young America." Had the worthy captain given them such names as *Thunderer* and *Slaughterer*, they might have been considered more true and appropriate. But *de gustibus non disputandum*.

On the 28th of February a select and numerous party of ladies and gentlemen, by invitation of Captain Stockton, embarked on board the steamer and proceeded down the river, intending to make a joyous day of it. And truly, all outward things seemed to conspire to the production of such a result.

The poet might not inaptly have called it the "bridal of the earth and sky." The sun shone out with superior brilliancy. The soft blue of the empyrean was untainted with a cloud. The sparkling waters of the Potomac seemed instinct with gladness. And "all went merry as a marriage bell," when the gay party, embracing the elite of the Washington circles, were fairly installed on board the noble steamer, that soon weighed anchor and proceeded on her excursion. Among the company were the President and his Cabinet—army and navy officers—members of Congress—the ladies of many of these, some in mature life, some in the fresher graces of early womanhood; many single ladies in "beauty's vernal bloom;" young and fair creatures, on whom life as yet sat lightly as the "breath of Summer on the yielding wave;" attended, of course, by gallant young men, too happy to anticipate their lightest wants. The

bluff person of a double-epauletted commodore might be seen near the plainly dressed Secretary of a department, with whom he was holding conversation, and the slight form of the President easily making its way amid a crowd of three hundred persons.

As the Princeton moved down the river, decorated with a hundred flags of various sizes, the scene was animating beyond description. Passing Alexandria, she went some distance down the Potomac, while the social hours glided away almost unconsciously to the merry company, all of whom forgot for a while the cares of business and the perplexities of politics in the sunny cheerfulness of that occasion. The leading minds of the nation were there, but unbent from the "rigid thoughts of State." The manly, robust form of Upshur, Secretary of State, was there. Time had cast its favorite color over his somewhat thin locks, while it had ripened the intellect within; the "dome of thought, the palace of the soul," was massive in its structure, indicating in its outlines the amplitude of the treasure it guarded; while the general expression of his countenance was in keeping with the character of his mind, which was of a high order, clear, strong, and practical. A noble victim indeed going to the sacrifice! Who knows what a day may bring forth?

The Secretary of the Navy, Thomas W. Gilmer, formerly Governor of Virginia, was a man of lighter person, a polished gentleman in his manners, distinguished as much for the amenity of his disposition as for the integrity of his character. Mrs. Gilmer, his accomplished lady, formed one of the party.

The Secretary of War, Judge Wilkins, distinguished

by his silvery locks and coal-black dress enveloping a tall and slender form, was also present.

In the progress of the afternoon, dinner having been finished, and the wine having been circulated freely, until a considerable number of "dead men," as an officer present called the empty bottles, had been pushed aside, it was proposed that the big gun should be discharged for the gratification of the company. The Princeton was then in the vicinity of Fort Washington. I need not describe the preparations, the progress, or the catastrophe. It is sufficient to say that a scene of horror and confusion ensued on the bursting of the gun, to which no pen can do adequate justice. To revive the recollection of the scene is quite undesirable. But what a change came over the spirit of that festivity! The gun had been charged with twenty-five pounds of powder, to give momentum to a ball two hundred and sixty-five pounds in weight. The roar of the ordnance was heard far and wide, but little did we imagine the wreck and wretchedness that followed the fatal experiment. Sufficient time having elapsed to recover a little from the confusion of the catastrophe, the Princeton retraced her melancholy way up the river, and at about five o'clock in the afternoon anchored opposite Alexandria. How different from her appearance when she went down in the morning! She was a floating house of mourning. All her gay pennons were struck, with the solitary exception of a flag at half-mast, the symbol of the triumphs of death in one short hour, or rather, moment of time. Its folds drooped mournfully over the dead, who were laid below, as decently as the urgency of the occasion allowed, until suitable arrange-

ments could be made for their removal. The countenances of the survivors wore a deadly gloom. Its solemnity was reflected in the sympathies of the spectators.

Directions were sent on shore for six coffins and shrouds to be made that night for the victims of the strange calamity. That night! The night of that beautiful day, when a few hours before those now breathless corpses were gayly walking the deck of the proud steamer! They were now sleeping their last, their dreamless sleep. What is man? What a vapor is life! The rich and the poor, the great and the obscure, then met in the dark valley. Death was the lord of them all. When, for the purpose of being conveyed to Washington, the coffined bodies were on the next day transferred to the Alexandria steamer, and arrayed in melancholy order, the observant spectator silently enumerated the names of the dead—Upshur, Gilmer, Kennon, Maxey, Gardiner—how few could tell the name of the poor colored servant of the President, above whom those distinguished men were so far exalted in life, but whose *companions* they had now become in death! He could not ascend to them, but they must descend to him. All died alike. Oh Death! thou art a mighty leveler. Thy polished shaft is as swift and sure for one man as for another. Art cannot turn it aside. Greatness cannot overawe thee. Genius cannot rise above thee. Obscurity cannot descend below thee. Wealth cannot bribe thee. Valor cannot cope with thee. Beauty cannot disarm thee.

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

At one o'clock, all things being ready, the steamer Johnson, with the remains of the slain, in charge of a committee of gentlemen from Washington, left the anchorage at Alexandria for the capital. The Princeton now commenced firing minute-guns, the first time she had broken silence since the horrible sounds of the previous day. The air was clear and brilliant; the sky unsullied with a cloud. An unwonted stillness pervaded the atmosphere. It was the last day of Winter, the severity of whose reign was yielding to the influence of approaching Spring. The last vestige of ice had disappeared from the Potomac, and her "glad waters" rolled in beauty to the sea, as when, on the day before, they were freighted with the brave, the fair, and the great.

At each discharge of the minute-gun the smoke shot high up in the atmosphere, exhibiting the most graceful undulations, and occasionally forming a perfect wreath that for some moments seemed suspended by some invisible hand.

Meanwhile thousands stood in silence on the wharf at Washington, awaiting the movements below. The first information that the steamer had left her anchorage was conveyed by the sound of the minute-guns as it swept through the intervening seven miles with solemn distinctness. The general sadness appeared to increase as her distance diminished, and when at length she arrived at the wharf, presenting to the eyes of the multitude the six coffins, for which as many hearses were in waiting, one universal feeling of sympathy took possession of the breasts of the spectators. The tender tribute of a tear might be seen on many a manly cheek, to say nothing of the sharper sorrows which by this event had accumu-

lated in private circles, overshadowing their brightest happiness, and bringing the young and the fair into an early communion with the associations of the sepulcher. The cortege proceeded to the mansion of the President, where it was arranged the bodies should repose until the day of the funeral. The flag of the Union infolded the coffins of the two Secretaries; the naval uniform, hat, and sword of the commodore* designated his remains.

It is not fitting to intrude on private grief, for it is of the nature of affliction to shrink from observation.

The retirement of solitude is most congenial to true sorrow. But feeling cannot always be repressed, and as its manifestations are most natural in childhood, so are they strong in proportion to the simplicity and tenderness of the young heart, which knows no disguise and conceals no sorrow. Hence when, on the day of the funeral, the little sons of the commodore entered the East Room, and took their seats in the mourning circle, it was under such a pressure of filial grief as could with difficulty be restrained, and which awoke the sympathies of all present, not unmixed with admiration for a manly deportment quite beyond their years. What was all the stately sorrow expressed in official pageantry compared with the overflowings of those affectionate hearts! Daughters were there, too, who hung in an agony of grief over the mutilated, though invisible remains of a father.

The second of March was a mournful day. It was, in some sense, a repetition of the scenes of April 8, 1841 when the last rites were paid to the deceased

* Kennon.

HARRISON amid manifestations of feeling, the recollection of which can never be obliterated from the minds of those who beheld the funeral ceremonies.

There was—there could be on this occasion no such depth of sorrow as was then discovered in the popular heart. The two Secretaries had been but recently elevated to their official dignities, and under circumstances that excited little interest either in the higher or lower ranks of political life. They were excellent, amiable, and able men. As such they were to be respected while living, and lamented when dead. But they had no broad grasp on the affections of the American people. Still the pageant was a solemn and affecting one, and fitted to impress deeply the minds of those who beheld it. It was a funeral of public men high in office, suddenly and violently slain by weapons of war intended only for injuring an enemy, and proudly trusted to achieve unprecedented things in naval warfare.

Never was the wisdom of vain man more egregiously at fault. Seldom have the violated laws of nature recoiled with a more mortifying energy on those who had undertaken the management of the fearful elements of destruction that are subject to those laws. We might adopt the language of David in his lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, as he beheld the wreck before him: "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

The scene in the East Room was imposing and impressive. Congress being in session, and the Supreme Court not having yet adjourned, there was an array of talent, station, and influence seldom concentrated into the same space. The body of Virgil Maxcy, Esq., hav-

ing been conveyed to his friends in Maryland for private burial, and that of the colored boy also being privately buried, there remained four for whom the public ceremonies were performed.

The line of the procession stretched the whole length of the avenue, attracting the attention of all observers, and reminding them how affectingly frail is the tenure of human existence; how very near the highest seats of power may be to the scepter of the skeleton King, beneath which all must sooner or later bow in unquestioning subjection. The display of the military—the immense number of the funeral coaches—the furred and craped standards—the sound of the muffled drums, and all indeed that appertained to the scene, were appropriate and congenial to the general feeling.

To quote from an eminent man, whose exalted genius, sanctified as it was by the spirit of piety, commanded the admiration of his country—I mean the Rev. Robert Hall, the illustrious dissenting divine, who, in his celebrated sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte Augusta, the pride and expectation of England, speaking of the mighty and noble of this world, says: “Let them remember that they must shortly be divested of the brilliant appendages and splendid ornaments of rank and station, and enter into a world where they are unknown; whither they will carry nothing but the essential elements of their being, impressed with those indelible characters which must sustain the scrutiny of Omniscience. These artificial decorations, be it remembered, are not, properly speaking, their own; the elevation to which they belong is momentary; and as the merit of an actor is not estimated by the part which he

performs, but solely by the truth and propriety of his representation, and the peasant is often applauded where the monarch is hissed, so when the great drama of life is concluded, He who allots its scenes, and determines its period, will take an account of his servants, and assign to each his punishment or reward, in his proper character." Such is the policy of the moral government of God, and to that should all, of whatever rank, conform themselves. May this, our beloved republic, be hereafter as much distinguished for her exemplary obedience to the laws of the Supreme Ruler, as she has been heretofore by His divine protection in times of imminent peril, and His exuberant mercies in every period of her eventful history!

It only remains to add, that when the procession arrived at the Congressional Burial Ground, the hearses with their respective treasures, accompanied by the clergy and the various members of the government of the United States, including the President and the surviving members of his cabinet, passed the long lines of Congressional monuments, and paused near the spacious receiving tomb—dirges for the dead meanwhile filling the air with solemn music—until all were laid in their silent resting-place, and dust was left to mingle with its kindred dust, till that day when, in the beautiful language of inspiration, "this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality!"

XII.

The Funeral of Taylor.

OF that vast and varied scene recently spread before us in this metropolis,* and laying so strong a grasp on the public mind, different observers, while conscious of being united in one great bond of sympathy, will take incidentally different views, and be struck with different features of that scene. A common funeral—and the funerals of members of Congress have become so common as to awaken only a transient interest—had ceased to act with the vigor of a powerful and practical lesson on the public mind.

Death, the inevitable messenger, had frequently entered Congress, especially the House of Representatives, within a few past years, but, for more than seven months of a most excited session, had withheld his footsteps from that Hall, and selected more illustrious victims, confining his reprisals to a single State, and that a peculiar one. But CALHOUN and ELMORE had not long disappeared from the busy scene, ere the providence of God struck at a still more conspicuous object, and under that stroke was extinguished the brightest star in our political hemisphere! I had never expected in one life to attend more than one funeral of a President in office. The remembrance of the august sepulture of HARRISON—of the obsequies of a Presi-

* Washington.

dent, the first in the history of our country—could never be obliterated from the mind. There was a freshness, an originality, a moral power in the scene never to be forgotten. They might be said to impair the influence even of the august scene of Saturday last, so close was the resemblance between them. It was like a copy from an original. But then, too, on the other hand, this repetition of a great providential event might be said to deepen the impression on a thoughtful mind, disposed to see the hand of God in it.

It was my privilege—denied to thousands of my fellow-citizens equally deserving it—to be assigned a seat within the limits of the East Room, where, under the dark and mournful canopy, reposed the remains of the illustrious Chief of the Republic—not in the center of the room, as did the body of Harrison, but at a short distance from its southern end, whose windows look on the fair bosom of the Potomac. In that room was a concentration of genius, talent, might of character, weight of influence, moral power, almost oppressive to the mind. Statesmen, counsellors, orators, warriors, senators, judges, officers of high degree, ambassadors from various nations, all assembled to do homage to Him in whose hand is the breath of them all, and at whose bidding, ONE, the most illustrious among them, having yielded up his high trust, lay as low in death as the humblest of his race, above which, in the course of an eventful life, he had been so far elevated. Here were the representatives of twenty millions of people. I seemed to behold the epitome of the whole nation. I saw men who had chained victory to their march, whether on the “mountain wave,” or on the ensanguined

plain, amid the shock of contending hosts. I beheld, too, those who had restored, or preserved our peace with nations, who had executed treaties, who had directed the expansion of our territory, conducted the affairs of State through dangerous crises and threatening exigencies, who were even now struggling with anxious hearts to maintain the peace, consolidate the union, and perpetuate the glory of their beloved country. And these men, but the other day engaged in fierce debate against each other, were now mingling their tears, and merging their differences around the bier of their common leader, as AMERICANS. Here Patriotism triumphed over Party; *party*, whose poisoned stream, being passed through the alembic of death, was turned into the sweet waters of life, peace and friendship. Or, to change the mode of speech, did he not descend as a kind and gentle angel, to heal, while he troubled the fountain of bitterness, and bid a nation bathe in the renovated flood? There was CASS, the great rival of the dead, who besought Senators to bury all dissensions in his grave. Those Senators had unanimously chosen to their presiding chair the successor of the Vice-President. Thus they came prepared to drop the tear of sincerity on the urn of the departed, for they were all the mourners of a true and revered man. FILLMORE sat at the foot of the coffin, "full of pregnant thoughts," yet calm, and trustful in that august Providence that had imposed on him such oppressive responsibilities. Near the southwestern corner of the room, in solemn repose, sat General SCOTT, who in that presence must needs have meditated on the past, on their common perils and conflicts during

a bloody war, and, after reaping the ripest laurels, stained, alas! with human gore, to find that they themselves must become the trophies of a sterner conqueror than them all! The military and naval array was exceedingly brilliant; the proud, the noble and martial bearing of these officers, in full uniform, might well fascinate a young and enthusiastic mind, while the honors paid even to the dead would augment the power of that fascination. A future President may have been born amid the strong feelings and aspirations of the scene and the assemblage. The spectator of such a picture would feel his attention strongly drawn to the persons of the members of the late Cabinet, who sat on the right of the Vice-President. Three of them, at least, are men of large stature and imposing aspect—CLAYTON, MEREDITH, and EWING—with minds to correspond. Yet they seemed to look more like massive shadows than the men they *were*; to participate, though living, in the loss of power with their venerated Chief now deceased. In a moment Death had dissolved the whole charm and prestige that surrounded these men as members of a great Cabinet, while he could not touch the imperial genius and inherent energies within. Looking at them as politicians, one could hardly refrain from considering them as oppressed with a double affliction. Most of them were sincerely attached to General Taylor.

Of the twenty pall-bearers, bald and gray heads were, for the most part, the portion. One or two old officers, and one or two venerable statesmen, tottered with age. On the shoulders of Mr. Custis I perceived the ancient Washington epaulette, which he has worn

on great occasions for fifty years. Though less ample than the modern mountings, it has covered illustrious shoulders. Although the coffin of the President was plain (but rich), there were some emblematic decorations. Besides the tassellings, there was a silver miniature eagle adorning the head of the coffin, and one on each side of its upper part. Rich broadcloth covered the exterior mahogany case, in which was placed the interior leaden coffin, this style being preferred by the family to the metallic case, Egyptian shaped, so beautifully made in New York, and in one of which was deposited the remains of Mr. Calhoun. Nothing could be more natural than the face of the President. Every feature was fair, placid, and expressive of the temper and attributes of the soul that had fled from its perishable tenement, to mingle with other spirits in the mysterious land. I looked, returned to my seat, and went and looked again; I wanted to linger and contemplate—while decay had not yet begun to obliterate those noble lines of countenance—that reflection, that mirror of the soul, in which could yet be seen the image of that honesty, that patriotism, that simplicity, that magnanimity, which were the salient, and the eminently salutary qualities of the man. All confess them now, however men in the heat of passion may have disparaged and even calumniated him, who never had a thought but to serve his country to the best of his powers, and to the last of his life. Never, perhaps, in the history of our country was there so sudden a collapse of political excitement, never so perfect a softening down of the asperities of party feeling.

Colonel Taylor, who walked at the head of the

mourners (none of the ladies of the family being present), strikingly resembles his brother, though having less broad features. He was calm, but it was the calmness of deep feeling, for he had only one such brother to lose. Richard, the son of the late President, unmoved by the pomp and circumstance of a national burial, labored with manly energy to suppress the grief, which, awakened and sharpened by intense filial affection, would arise in his bosom. Colonel Bliss, who possesses a countenance of uncommon amenity and sweetness, indicating, too, in his moral constitution, tender sensibilities, demeaned himself with great dignity. How strong the ties that bind him to the memory, as they bound him to the person of his beloved Chief! During the funeral service, which was performed by the Rev. Messrs. Butler and Pyne, a choir of singers poured their strains around the coffin of the dead, enhancing the tenderness of the scene, and intimating most impressively the immense superiority of the spiritual and divine over the carnal, the visible, the physical, with which our earthly humanity has so much to do. The roll of the drum, the loud strains of the martial trumpet, the clangor of cymbals, were not heard within that now consecrated place. Nought of instrumental was heard but the soft, sweet music of a seraphina near the coffin, whose notes well blended with living voices, as they sang: "I heard a voice from heaven, saying," &c. The effect was greatly heightened by the occasional sound of the distant minute gun, rendering its tribute to the memory of the hero who lay on that bier. There is to me something inexpressibly solemn in that sound amid such associations.

I need not detail to you the ceremonies abroad. The papers are filled with descriptions of them. But who can help speaking of that war-horse, led after the hearse by Sweetzman, the faithful Achates of the General in his wars? The thousands of observers wanted at least for the time to endow old Whitey with intelligence, that he might be sensible of his loss. Was ever animal placed in more interesting circumstances? What had Bucephalus to relate that could surpass the achievements of this warrior animal? There was the saddle of Palo Alto and Resaca, with its holsters and inverted spurs, forever vacated by its rider. The cannon that roared in the ears of Whitey was a familiar sound, and, therefore, did not startle him; the loud strains of the martial bands animated rather than depressed him, though of mournful tenor. We wished he were conscious of his situation, but there was the same restless activity about him, which was common to him and his master. The military display was extensive and brilliant, giving us a kind of type of the immense and invisible military power of this country, dormant, indeed, and so may it forever remain, as the elements of a storm in repose. To my civil and unpracticed eye the numerous companies of volunteers from this city and surrounding cities, composing whole regiments, appeared to march and perform their evolutions with an exactness rivaling the U. S. regulars. The famous fatal Light Artillery of Duncan, now commanded by Sedgwick, attracted much attention.

At the tomb, the highest military honors were paid; and the form of the deceased President was committed to its rest in the same place where, nine years ago, was

deposited the body of Harrison. Of Cabinet officers then present, might now be seen Messrs. Webster, Ewing, and Badger. Here, surrounded by a multitude of the distinguished dead, among them CLINTON, GERRY, BROWN, MACOMB, RODGERS, WIRT, and others, not long since figuring on the busy stage of public life, was our TAYLOR laid to take his dreamless rest, that knows no waking till the final day.

Of Brutus the poet has said :

"He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson,
A name which is a virtue, and a soul,
Which multiplies itself through all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a State
Turns servile !"

May the death of our President, since his life could not, be sanctified to our nation !

XIII.

Summerfield, Nevins, Larned, and Cornelius.

It was in the winter of 1825, that, on a certain day, I received an invitation from Rev. WILLIAM NEVINS, then pastor of the first Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, to dine with him at the well-known white parsonage-house, adjoining the church. Arriving at the house, I was agreeably surprised to meet with two eminent ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Rev. SAMUEL MERWIN, then preacher in charge of the Light Street Church, and the Rev. JOHN SUMMERFIELD, who was spending the winter in Baltimore. With these gentlemen I had formed some previous acquaintance. I was happy in this opportunity of perpetuating it. The amiable wife of our host received us with that Christian kindness of heart and easy grace of manner which distinguished her even in a refined and polished community, while her husband, evidently in the enjoyment of a pleasant home, seemed to blend his own desires with hers to make all around him happy. He had been, I think, about five years pastor of the church, and the excellent effects of his preaching and pastoral labors were already visible, even in circumstances of peculiar difficulty. Surrounded by parishioners of wealth and leading influence, he had made such full and gratifying proof of his ministry, that, young as he was, no man had found occasion to despise his youth. He

had *magnified* his office, where to *maintain* it was difficult and honorable. If an extraordinary luxuriance of imagination was perceptible in his earlier pulpit productions, it sprang out of the naturally rich mold of a mind which, in its progressive action, developed a vigor, the evidence of which was seen in the harmonious exercise of all its powers. Between Nevins and Summerfield there was a congeniality of sentiment and feeling, in the depth of which all distinction of *denomination* was lost. They loved as brethren, and the young Methodist was often seen in the pulpit of his Presbyterian friend, who was never more pleased than when he saw his aisles crowded with hearers standing to listen to the simple and fascinating eloquence of the then most popular preacher in this country. Men are naturally inclined to imitate those whom they admire, especially if they are in the same line of life with the objects of their admiration. But while the good judgment of Nevins placed him above that temptation, it was evident that his style of preaching was in a measure modified by his communion with Summerfield. There was such a sweet simplicity in the latter, both as to matter and manner, as well in public as in private; his faults were so few and faint, and his talents and virtues so many and manifest, that a generous and admiring spirit might be pardoned for the enthusiasm of its love for one so lovely. Nor would it be a crime to copy from so valuable an original. If there were scarcely any faults to imitate, the danger would be still less. But neither of these three men, all eminent in their sphere, imitated the others. They, however, drank into each other's spirit, and profited by each other's experi-

ence. To mingle in conversation with such excellent servants of the Lord, to witness them exchanging thoughts, to observe the influence of the doctrines which they publicly taught on their private practice, was indeed a privilege enjoyed with ardor and remembered with gratitude. The thought that those three brethren are now before the throne, not looking through a glass darkly, but seeing face to face—that they have probably met in heaven—while it throws a pensive mellow light upon the earthly scene in the parsonage, exhilarates our anticipation of the blessedness of heaven, and admonishes us not to be slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.

It seems difficult to realize that they are dead—all—all. The whole picture of that interview is vivid to the memory's eye. Merwin, with his large and portly form—his air of dignity—his soprano voice. Nevins, smaller in size, but combining a look of stability and earnestness, characteristic of the man: his dark, poetic eye revolving with brilliancy in its orb, the expression of the eyes being more intense and peculiar from a cast in one of them. Summerfield, slender in form, of a pallid face—alas! too truly premonitory of what all but himself feared—an eye of changeable hue, inclining to be languid from disease: of a mild, dark blue, when the view was near, but at a distance, especially in the pulpit, turning still darker, so as to be called black. He was cheerful, but it required some effort. Some anecdotes, in his usual inimitable style of narration, fell from him, not only to amuse and interest, but to edify. Once he ventured on a little humor, when relating a

recent anecdote connected with himself and his brother Merwin, in reference to an appointment to preach a few miles in the country. Summerfield's fame had drawn together an immense crowd to the place where notice had been given he would preach. Not being able to fulfill his appointment, he had engaged Mr. Merwin to supply his place: a dangerous thing even for a man of his power and eloquence to attempt, and an instance of as bold and disinterested a regard to a sense of duty as can any where be found. When Merwin appeared on the stand (it was in the open air) in his ample bodily proportions, his very appearance seemed to the mass, who supposed him to be Summerfield, to be a fit representative of the *greatness* of his mind. Nor could Merwin, with his animating, rousing eloquence, have possibly fallen below the expectations of his audience, had they never known that he was not Summerfield. The latter, surveying their respective persons, of such antipodal dimensions, smiled at the absurdity of the one being mistaken for the other, even by those who knew neither. But the principal pleasure of this interview arose from the fact of the evident and earnest piety of those three men, now no more on earth. The duties of the minister of Christ, the power of the Gospel, the glory of the kingdom of Jesus, were among the themes of social converse. At that time, Summerfield, when able to preach, drew crowds to listen to the divine word as expounded and enforced by him. He had a sweet simplicity of manner, that charmed his hearers, and did so gracefully interweave the language of Scripture with the thread of his discourse, as to prove that he was no stranger to the Book of Life. Equally

manifest was the richness of his Christian experience. But who could suppress the thought that his stay was but transient among the living—that his staff was in his hand—that, like the Israelite at the Passover, his posture was a waiting one;—he was about to depart for the promised land? This was in January. In the following June he took possession of his crown. Dr. Nevins survived him a number of years, but died early. And Mr. Merwin, I think, followed at no great distance of time. They are gone! It is a great thing to die. For a minister of God, O what an event! One of the last breathings of Nevins' heart was for the missionary cause—for a perishing world. How happy must the spirits of these holy men now be "with Christ!" Be it ours, dear brethren in the ministry, to aspire to such an immortal life. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Larned and Cornelius were kindred spirits: noble in form, of commanding personal appearance: each had an eye which, like a faithful mirror, reflected the inward soul. They were formed for enterprise, for aggressive movement. They were fitted for leaders, and being inspired with love for dying men, desired to "spend and be spent for the souls" of men. They were both filled with admiration of the character and achievements of Paul, and seemed to desire to drink deeply of his spirit. It is not strange they should be deeply interested in each other. Cornelius preceded Larned on a Southern mission. Larned entered into his labors, with what love, with what earnestness, with what eloquence, the

Church knows. I have been favored with the perusal of a letter written by Cornelius to his friend after he had taken possession of that dangerous post at New Orleans, where, in the prime of life and in the bloom of his intellectual promise, he fell to rise no more in this hemisphere, but we trust to shine in another with the brightness of the firmament. This letter is the effusion of private friendship, and of course not intended for the public eye—for that reason the more true, unstudied, and open-hearted. It is dated at Salem, October 11, 1819, thirty-two years ago, yet how do its thoughts breathe, its spirit kindle, its words burn, as if they were now holding communion with us! He addresses Larned as his “dear and precious brother:” dear to him as he saw the image of Christ in him, for as “unto us, who believe, he is precious,” so are all the friends and servants of Christ.

“My heart almost bleeds,” he writes, “to think how you have been neglected by one who loves you, and prays for you with an affection and an interest utterly inexpressible. Why, then, you will ask with great propriety, have I delayed so long to write you even a line? My dear brother Larned, forgive me. I have not shown, I acknowledge, the attention which you, *as the best of friends*, had a right to expect while sojourning in a distant and sickly land. It would be impossible to tell you the anxiety which I have habitually felt for your welfare and success, and more especially since we have received intelligence that once more the pestilence has visited that section of the country in which you are placed.

“Dear brother, I have often involuntarily exclaimed, *is he alive?* Or, may God have called him from his labors, and taken him to his everlasting rest? And while I am writing, I know not where you are, nor under what circumstances you may be placed. God Almighty preserve you, my dear friend, is my unceasing prayer. The Great Head of the Church knows how to dispose of his ministers. He has made you what you are, and when you have finished the work to which he has appointed you, he will call you to your reward on high. Will it afford you one comfort to know that you have friends, who often remember you before God? Will it be any source of consolation, laboring as you do far from ministerial brethren, and deprived of many of the sweet enjoyments of Christian communion, to know that in a weekly prayer-meeting held in this place by the ministers, ‘Brother Larned and his great work’ is a chief subject of prayer? Then be assured, I beseech you, notwithstanding his neglect in writing, that your old friend Cornelius is, what he ever was, yours, with unceasing and growing affection. I write this short letter merely as an introduction to a longer one, which I shall commence this week, and in which I intend to make you acquainted with some of the leading incidents of my course since I saw you last. Meanwhile, let me acknowledge your short letter of July last, and entreat you, if I may not have forfeited already your friendship, that you will relieve the anxious mind of one who is as true a friend in his heart as you have on earth. Be careful of your health and life. Rush not unnecessarily into danger, and expose not to the hazard of destruction a talent which,

while you live, is one of the dearest hopes of the Church. Ab imo pectore,*

“Yours,
“ELIAS CORNELIUS.”

Such was the warm-hearted effusion of this devoted servant of the Lord, who, though he survived his friend many years, yet may be said to have died young.

XIV.

The Shades of Mount Vernon.

THERE is a solemn grandeur in the scene, that instantly impresses itself on the minds of all who visit it. If you pass down the Potomac in a steamer, you behold under a sort of fascination the lofty mansion of the Father of his Country, crowning a height on the west side of the river, and nothing can take off the gaze so long as there is any thing visible. It is a splendid view in summer or autumn, and is suggestive of great trains of thought. Sometimes, while the eye is intently fixed on the scene, and the mind is calling up the numerous associations of the place, suddenly the ear is greeted with strains of solemn music—perhaps from a band on board—so soft, so pure, so pensive, so perfectly congenial with those emotions in which the soul is at the moment luxuriating, that they seem to sound the lowest depths of the inward man, and task the sensibilities to their utmost capacity.

* From the bottom of my heart.

The tomb itself being invisible from the river, the imagination is in a measure left to its own conjectures and wonderings, both as to the precise spot where the ashes of the illustrious dead repose, and as to the probable effect that would be produced on the mind by standing on that spot. We are sufficiently near, however, to be strongly affected with the *genius loci*; to feel the energetic influences of that great example transmitted by him who dwelt there, and who, though "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," preferred the domestic felicity imbosomed in that mansion to the splendors of the battle-field, the civic honors of the State, or even the hearty applause of his admiring countrymen.

In such solid and enduring virtues was the essence of his character laid, that we can conceive of no emergency arising in the course of his earthly existence, no phasis of his personal history, in which, with a genius, a temper, and a talent like his, he would not have been equal to any task within the limit of human achievement. The man, then, who lived in that house, and who lies in yonder tomb, was the embodiment of patriotism in its loftiest moods; of heroism in its noblest developments; of a serene and practical philosophy that meditated the improvement of mankind, and instead of wasting itself in the indulgence of evanescent visions, seized at once the realities of things, and succeeded in elevating the world's standard of them.

Classic fable tells us of the statue of a god that fell from heaven, and immediately became the object of devout and enthusiastic worship. Heaven sent us the living form of one who was greater than any of the dei-

fied heroes of antiquity ; and if Patriotism had desired a statue of itself, it would have found a model in the person of Washington. But what are statues compared with those ideas—of inherent grandeur—that possess the mind with a sort of regal authority, claiming, like heavenly truth, the homage of the human understanding—ideas suggested by a view of the shades of Mount Vernon !

The genius of Byron, while beholding with intense perception the elements and achievements of departed greatness, exclaims of these intellectual and civic architects :

“ A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue ;
The present hours, the future age,
For them roll on, to them belong.”

And justly might he have individualized Washington in those additional lines :

“ *Where* shall they turn to mourn thee less ?
When cease to hear thy cherished name ?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While grief’s full heart is fed by fame.”

We may suppose every variety of character passing in the daily steamer the shades of Mount Vernon. The statesman looks on that silent, solitary grove, where sleeps the founder of the model republic, and says to himself, Why need we a *beau IDEAL*, when we have a *beau REAL* in yonder grove ? The relics that there recline in their majestic sleep, were animated by a more truly imperial spirit than was ever enthroned in the crowned heads of earth ; a spirit that reigned by divine prerogative over subject minds ; a spirit whose divine

right is acknowledged by millions of free-born men, whose regard for mere king-craft or priest-craft is as slender as their estimation of an enlightened civil government and their reverence for the sacred institutions of God are profound; a spirit that achieved and held its sway, not by dint of the sword, but by a scepter, the materials of which, like the symbol rods of our republic, were bound together by the bands of his own peerless judgment, and composed of qualities as true to every crisis as they were sovereign and efficient in their operation. That is the way to rule men—if we must have the term, which is ill fitted to republican institutions—not by dungeons, towers, and inquisitions, State trials, and star-chambers, but by giving them light, liberty, free investigation, and self-government. Washington was, in his own person, and with all the might of his mind, a model of self-government, as he should be who would found a self-governing empire.

Amid all her magnificent bequests, Rome could never endow the world with the idea of *POPULUS IMPERATOR*. To realize that idea, Washington, with a grace and grandeur unknown to an Alexander or Cæsar, refused a kingly crown, and retired to the shades of Mount Vernon. Twice he left those shades in obedience to the mandates of the sovereign people—reluctantly emerging from them, eagerly retreating into them. He considered himself the public servant of the popular sovereignty. So is every President; and so should he and all governmental officers be regarded, with all due kindness and respect to their persons and offices. Away, then, with that phraseology so often heard in conversation and in the pulpit—"Our rulers." No! we, the

people, are the rulers! Magistrates, senators, representatives, judges, are the instruments of our sovereignty. But with us is the power, and a fearful trust it is.

The man of military aspirations or the laureled warrior passes Mount Vernon, and receives a lesson which neither Charles V. nor even Cincinnatus could teach him. "Twere worth ambition" to be the lord of that mansion, the hermit of those shades, or the tenant of that sepulcher, like Washington. But who ever came even within the penumbra of that orb? Napoleon had as deep a solitude, but mortification and remorse were the ministering demons that haunted his exile and denied him repose. What Napoleon hated, Washington loved—retirement. The one could not, though he would, have left that retirement to rush into the arena of strife, tumult, and bloodshed. The other would not, though he could, have left his retirement to be a kind of perpetual dictator, the energy of whose moral power was so complete as to disdain the aid of physical force. The stern and sanguinary maxim, *inter arma silent leges**, had no sway where his influence was felt. It was his privilege and glory to reverse it: to be "first in peace;" to proclaim, *Cedant arma togæ*.† His victories in peace surpassed in brilliancy his victories in war. Let military men ponder it, and be wise.

Next we may suppose the poet gliding over the bosom of the Potomac, whose sparkling waters gently bathe the shores of Mount Vernon, as if their very gladness was restrained by the spirit of reverence for the

* In the midst of arms the laws are silent.

† Let the military bow to the civil authority.

place. He might be charmed with the summer scenery around him ; pleasing ideas would be awakened as he contemplated the serenity of the sky, the flowing waters, the silvan forests of Virginia, and the brilliant gardens of Mount Vernon, all undisturbed by the din and hum of artificial life, but these would, not even to the most excitable imagination, be the chief attractive features of the place. The elements of natural beauty and sublimity are distributed through the wide world ; there is but one Mount Vernon.

Let us suppose Coleridge, the philosophical poet, to have made a pilgrimage, while yet a traveler on earth, to the tomb of Washington. That imagination, which took fire in the vale of Chamouny, as it gazed with throbbing intensity on the Alpine glaciers above, and blazed up to the throne of the Eternal with a more than mortal brilliancy and grandeur, would have trembled under the weight of its own inspirations, as in an ecstasy of wonder and delight it approached the urn of Washington. The voices of Nature, however rich their music to his ear, would have been silent, while the hero spake, or while the poet imagined all just and natural things as connected with the vision before him. He would dwell upon the majestic form of the entombed hero ; each regal feature, stamped by the hand of heaven on that brow and face, would pass under his pencil ; and then the soul of patriotism that lived in him, and which is not dead, but has entered other living forms, and may this moment be vital in an Austrian prison, or an Italian dungeon, or even in the Siberian desert, would quicken the strokes of that pencil : the sublimity of an empire founded on an acknowledgment of the rights of

man, and his ability to judge for himself, and to govern himself, attaching itself to the chief actor in the heroic drama, and making him sublime beyond the lot of man, would fill the imagination of the moral painter. Then, if his eye glanced from the tomb to the mansion, he would be struck with the fact how intensely that man of might and moral sublimity relished the calm pleasures of domestic life; how triumphantly he came forth out of a bloody contest, victorious over his foes, yet un-seduced by the blandishments of military glory; how safely he passed the severer crucible of the first peace and prosperity of an inchoate State, and then hastened to enjoy that for which he had proved himself eminently qualified—the purity and dignity of private life. The poet would not look to that faded and decaying mansion for a specimen of elegant and impressive architecture, but his imagination would dress it in fair and sober colors, not inharmonious with the whole scene around.

Then there is the shrubbery which he planted in his own garden, the lemon-trees which he set out, and many beautiful forms and products of nature that began to thrive under his agency. Emerge from the garden—tread the grove—go forth into the midst of the cultivated acres. You will perceive the “smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed.” And the farmer in cultivating that field was as systematic as the warrior in planning a campaign, or the statesman in framing a constitution.

These, it must be confessed, are all impressive things; topics of general and commanding interest to all who sympathize with the hopes of humanity, and rejoice in its elevation above inferior things. They are worthy to be the sources of impulses to the noblest genius.

I have often traversed these walks, circumambulating the area of this august spot of earth, but it cannot, in the usual sense of the word, become *familiar*. There is something in the spirit of the place that repels *familiarity*. The whole place seems a natural temple for the exercise of VENERATION, and you wish to be a *solitary* worshiper at that shrine. You want no one to speak in your ear, "*how glorious was Washington,*" any more than you wish to hear some external voice praising the virtues of a dear friend over whose ashes you stand weeping. The mind would be alone at this tomb. It is even offended at the sight of an occasional monument of a relative near the sepulcher of the illustrious dead, though by perfect right it is there, for it knows that Washington is "alone in his glory," and as a public man is viewed apart from all private relations. So absorbed do we become in the contemplation of the character of the man, that we forget all around us is private property, even the tomb and the ashes it contains. We consent that the sarcophagus of Martha Washington should lie in equal apparent honor by the side of that of the hero, because he loved, cherished, and honored her in life; in that life in which God made them one, and in death they must not be divided. Moreover, she was to him as a ministering angel in the darkest period of the Revolution. But further than this the arrangers of the dead could not go.

On his marble coffin is stamped the American Eagle and the name—WASHINGTON. He needs no inscription. Not words, but thoughts, are to honor him who set the world on thinking. A man came from the borders of Persia, one who had studied history, institutions, cus-

toms, men; he had stood on the summit of Mount Ararat, where the ark rested after the flood; on Mount Sinai, whence the lightnings of Jehovah gleamed in terror on the camp of Israel; he had visited various spots of earth on which the deeds of men had conferred immortality; but never had he felt such emotions rushing through him as when he drew near the tomb of Washington, and stood in silent contemplation of the wonders associated with his name. It seemed to him that he had now reached the climax of human interest.

One is inclined to ask, What would be the words of such a man as Chateaubriand on entering these shades? Full of observation, of a warm imagination, and of a mystic faith; deeply sensible to the grand in nature, the sublime in morals, and the heroic in every thing, what would he say? With all his devotion to royalty, he must say, This was a child of Providence; a predestined actor in a mighty drama that is arresting the attention of the world. Boundless are the solitudes of America! boundless the population that is destined to fill them. His imagination kindled, his heart expanded, when nearly "sixty years since" he beheld our "Western wilds," and his eye ran along the mighty current of the father of waters. But it was rather in admiration of the natural features of the scenery, so far transcending the miniatures of Europe, than of the opening grandeur of the mighty republic, of which those features may be said to be the splendid symbols. What might be called the romance of Chateaubriand's mind would be reality here. Nor need his noble spirit have sacrificed one iota of its loyalty, one link of that chain of affection which bound him to the throne of the power he chose

to serve, when it payed its just tribute to the memory of him whom God raised up for the stupendous work which he accomplished through him.

The French philosopher was a cordial believer in the doctrine of an ever-active Providence. He might have studied the sublime lessons presented to him amid the shades of Mount Vernon. He professed to adore Christianity. He earnestly studied its genius, if not its spirituality. Here we have Christianity, not arrayed in gorgeous apparel, but clothed in the robes of simplicity and truth; not seeking an external alliance with principalities and powers, but aiming to rule the hearts of the people; not so much the object of romantic contemplation, as the inward life of the intellect and the heart; not an humble and dependent beneficiary of the treasury of the State, but the dignified recipient of the voluntary gifts of freeborn Christians. To all this the policy of Washington tended. On such results was his heart fixed, and while that mighty heart lies still and passionless in its urn, millions are throbbing with the impulses it imparted to them. And with every revolving year grows stronger the attraction that draws minds from the ends of the earth to the SHADES OF MOUNT VERNON.

"Though years elapse,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom."

XV.

The Last Day of Summer.

August 31, 1850.

THIS day closes the summer of 1850. If the seasons have a voice to speak, then those for whose benefit they were created should have an ear to hear. There is a spirit in them which communes with the spirit of man. There is a divine philosophy in them fitted to engage the purest intellect; a beauty, a wisdom, a secret power, testifying that they are of God. The life of man is called a season, because its periods bear an analogy to those of the revolving year. Youth is its spring: when the "tender leaves of hope" are put forth, its blossoms glow with peculiar beauty and freshness, while within each opening bud is embraced the germ of the future. "The child is father to the man." Youth is beautiful as the spring, and as evanescent, too. "Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down." Even the "goodliness" of young humanity is as the "flower of the field." But the flower dies to live. The reproductive principle is there, and so of man. He "dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Not in the dark and fabled region of a gloomy non-existence, that dreamy realm to which atheism and infidelity fly for relief from the pressure of the invisible government of God, but in the spirit-land. The soul has returned to God!

Hear the testimony of Lord Byron while yet in the

heyday of youth; admired, courted, intoxicated with human applause, and at times scoffing at the claims of Christianity. "Of the immortality of the soul it appears to me there can be but little doubt. If we attend for a moment to the action of mind, it is in perpetual activity. I used to doubt it, but reflection has taught me better. It also acts so very independent of the body—in dreams, for instance. * * * I have often been inclined to materialism in philosophy, but could never bear its introduction into Christianity, which appears to me essentially founded on the soul. For this reason, Priestley's materialism always struck me as deadly. Believe the resurrection of the body if you will, but not without the soul."

Spring passes, by an insensible gradation, into summer. Thus does youth pass into manhood. This period is called the meridian of life. How soon we reach it! All after that is decline. Yet who is willing to confess to himself that he is in the decline of life? When the limbs are strong, the muscles elastic, the nerves firm, the cheek full and rosy, the eyes sparkling with brightness, the spirits buoyant, and bent on some aggressive movement, who shall whisper that the pale king is near? Yet "thou destroyest the hope of man." He is but the shadow of what he shall be seen to be in other climes, in that other state of being but dimly revealed, and, therefore, invested with a sublimity and solemnity that forbid all trifling. Man's life is, in fact, his eternity. It stamps his character, shapes his destiny, molds his soul into the perpetual image of the beautiful or the deformed, the lovely or the hateful, which is to constitute its welcome to the regions of

light and love, or its banishment to those of darkness and sorrow.

To many this has been a joyous summer. The population of the land has been afloat. What a multitude have been on the wing! How have they in crowds been chasing the phantom pleasure! Many have in vain been hunting for health. Multitudes have fallen beneath the stroke of death. Among them, in sadness and sorrow, we have to record the name of our honored President, who, in the fullness of his fame and the ripeness of an eventful life, has been called away from the busy scenes of earth to the settled realities of the eternal state. How sternly impartial, how severely certain is death! England's great leading statesman, too, was suddenly snatched away in the same month, rendering July, always an eventful month, memorable in this semi-centennial year. What hopes by these two events alone were crushed—what prospects blasted—what changes superinduced—what a sudden turn given to the current of men's reflections, and even to the tide of a nation's affairs, ever under the watchful eyes of Him, who sits the enthroned and Omnipotent Ruler over all!

Neither as a nation nor as individuals is it for us to predict the future; but happy shall we be if, as the seasons advance in swift and solemn succession, we reverently observe and conscientiously obey the laws annexed to our being; follow the guidance of the Holy and True, and live for his glory who hath made all things for himself.

What mighty processes in nature have been going on, as the fervid sun of summer shone, or the burdened

clouds poured out their rich treasures on the earth! Nor less have there been secret elaborations in the moral world. There is a sublimity in the operation of moral causes, even surpassing those developments we see in the material works of God. The trains are laying which, in their ultimate results, will fill the minds of men with astonishment, if they do not startle the repose of nations. When we look at one of the various theaters of action before us—our National Congress—did it ever know such a session, such a summer? It is not uncommon for great men, in some sense, to control events by the energy and decision of their wills. But the resistless events of the year seem rather to have controlled the wills of great and small. They have been like those so graphically described by a master pen as at sea in a storm, reeling with the motion of the ship, and “*at their wit's end.*”

The lovers of pleasure have been abroad this summer in great numbers to feast their senses on the beauties of nature, and luxuriate amid romantic solitudes, by cool fountains, or on the margin of the great sea. Your bodies have been refreshed, your spirits reinvigorated. Have your minds been improved, or your hearts reformed? “The mind is its own place.” We may change our skies, but keep our bad tempers. The living spring of happiness is within. The stream from that fountain may be fed and enlarged by other streams, but it must rise in the heart. The same Byron quoted above, writing to a friend from Switzerland, said: “I am a lover of nature, and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue, and welcome privation, and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. But in all this the recollection of

bitterness, and more especially of recent and home desolation, which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here; and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory around, above, and beneath me." * * "My existence is a dreamy void."

He died in the summer of his life, in the very meridian of his days, that should have been consecrated to Him who bestows the immortal gift of genius on a chosen few of the millions of our race. Oh! had he drank at the fountain of living waters!

Not he alone, but multitudes of sinners, the gay, the thoughtless, the profane, the impious rejecters of the love of Jesus, will, having sported away the brief day of their life, at last take up the lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!"

XVI.

The Last Day of Autumn.

"The lengthened night elapsed, the morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the LAST AUTUMNAL DAY."

THUS sang the poet of the seasons, who held deep and solemn communion with Nature in her various and beautiful forms. His ear was open to the melody of her voice. His heart was susceptible of every just and tender impression from such a source. His hand copied her beauties, and thus multiplied the pleasures which she is fitted to impart. But if the inspiration of genius moved the poet to the utterance of high and ennobling thoughts on such a theme, the inspiration of God moved the prophet to say, "We all do fade as a leaf," and thus by a mere allusion to an interesting fact in nature, to teach, with sententious brevity, a volume of divine truth. A single stroke of the prophetic pencil, conceived, perhaps, while the prophet was walking abroad on some autumnal day, spreads before us one broad view of human life, admonishing the transient tenants of a season so to number their days, as to apply their hearts unto heavenly wisdom.

I have come, then, with my quarterly lesson to-day, dear reader, and ask your serious attention for only a few moments. Be not reluctant to listen, for it may be the last admonition to which your attention will be

called. Since I came to you on the "last day of summer," some of your number have gone, either to "the better land," of which the tender Hemans sang so sweetly; or, I fear, to the dark world, where every hateful, dreadful passion lives, and every lovely, gentle affection dies—whence Hope is banished, and where Despair is enthroned for eternity! I have buried some. The pastors of thousands can, if they could be heard, testify to the sad offices which they have been called to perform for the dead. The *season* of many a sinner has closed. The winds of approaching winter will sweep heavily over his snow-crowned grave. But I now speak to the living. To them, I say, "Be sober." It is the spirit of the season. Poetry did not merely present an image, but echoed the voice of thoughtful Reason, when characterizing the *sobriety* of autumn.

"The pale, descending year, yet *pleasing* still,
 A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
 Incessant rustles from the *mournful* groves,
 Oft startling such as, *studious*, watch below."
 * * * * * "Then is the time
 For those whom wisdom and whom Nature charm,
 To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
 And soar above this little scene of things,
 To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their feet,
 To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
 And woo lone *Quiet* in her silent walks,"*

Those who have reveled away the bright days of summer, ought now to begin to *think*. The leaves of autumn have been falling around you for some time, each little messenger whispering into the ear of man,

* Thomson.

as it descends to its native earth, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The beasts that perish have their *pleasures*, but never any *thoughts* in the high sense of the word, as involving the mental exercises of a being destined to immortality. The mind of man is made to ascend—even "through nature up to nature's God." Let the Christian reflect on his inward experience and his outward acts during the autumnal months. Ask, What have I done for God and the souls of men? Let the sinner answer the question, Why have I permitted another season to pass without REPENTANCE? Let the main current of your thoughts, at least to-day, flow *upward*.

Remember, also, that the days of the season have been continually *shortening*. There is instruction in this. If the youth will not receive it, perhaps he of middle age will listen. Is it not so with you? Do not your days seem to fly more swiftly, since you have passed the spring-time of youth, and reached your meridian? The descent to the grave is like that of a material body by the force of gravity to the earth—with a continually increasing momentum. "My days are like a weaver's shuttle." Then up, and be doing. One so near your coffin, as you seem to be, has no time to lose. It is dreadful to trifle on the very confines of the tomb, which is opening to receive you.

This is the *gathering* season. The suns and rains of summer were so abundantly and seasonably distributed, that the earth brought forth plentifully. And the fruits have been safely gathered in, so that "the barns are filled with plenty," and God is feeding us with "the finest of the wheat." What multitudes have "laid up

in store for the time to come," for the wants of the body! Let all this teach thee to provide for thy soul. Its wants are more pressing, its demands more imperative, than those of the body. The Bible sends the lazy sluggard to the little ant, to learn a lesson of industry from that insect, "which provideth her meat in summer, and gathereth her food in harvest." Read that, Prov. vi. 6-11. How long wilt thou sleep, O sinner? Labor not, I entreat you, for the meat that perisheth.

This is a *preparing* season. Men are preparing in various ways for the approach of winter. I mean for the body; how they shall feed it, how clothe it, how warm it, how defend themselves from the rigors of the cold season. Who is preparing for the immortal soul? Winter will be upon us to-morrow. To-day we attend the funeral of autumn, sweet autumn. To-morrow

"Dread winter spreads his *earliest* glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year.
See here thy pictured life; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last
And shuts the scene!"

Yes, this winter will wrap its winding-sheet around the faded form of many a loved and cherished one, that has been permitted to see the end of autumn. How many, too, are preparing for a winter of pleasure and fashionable folly that will be met by the pale messenger, and summoned to another world! God will "not meet such as a man," smiling to see again the countenance of a dear friend, but as an insulted and

indignant Judge, who comes to execute judgment upon all the ungodly.

As in cold northern regions the shepherd-farmer prepares a shelter for his flocks and herds, so has God provided in his divine Son "a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, a refuge in the day of trouble," into which all his righteous people will run and find security. Reader, have you fled for refuge to lay hold on this hope?

As this, too, is the season when the feathered myriads, conducted by that providence which men call *instinct*, emigrate to milder skies and more sunny climes, so let this fact in the history of nature remind us that there are purer regions and holier realms, to which the Spirit of God invites us, and for which, if prepared by holiness of heart, we shall soon "wing our way," never, never to return to the murky fogs and chilling damps of this unfriendly region.

"Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond the reign of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath."

I accompanied recently to the banks of the Jordan one of three sisters, each of whom faded with the leaf: to each of whom successively autumn brought consumption, and an inheritance in heaven "that fadeth not away." It was the first painless death I ever witnessed. The body scarcely suffered. It yielded up the spirit without an effort. The soul was in triumph. If an *angel* could die, I thought it would be thus. And after death the countenance looked so gentle and heav-

only! It seemed a mirror of the emotions that *had been* there, and, were it possible, to have forgotten they were gone! It was the impression sealed and left by a soul, happy in God, upon the mortal clay. "Let me die the death of the righteous." May the coming winter bring all necessary comforts to your home, and all divine blessings to your soul—its short days be filled with deeds of active usefulness, and its long evenings cheered with the presence of God, and when your body shall descend to the grave, may your soul ascend to the bosom of the Lamb!

That the seasons by their original constitution were intended to act upon the intellectual and moral, as well as physical powers of man, cannot be doubted by those who have observed how, in fact, mind has been quickened and exalted by their influence. To the imagination, especially, they seem to minister the very aliment of its life and beauty. How does the soul of the sweet Psalmist of Israel kindle under such influence! Of uninspired poetry an instance or two will suffice—the Pastorals of Virgil, and the Seasons of Thomson. Nor are these merely works of the imagination. As they are the product of intellectual labor, so it requires intellectual labor to understand them. They cannot be skimmed. There is deep and divine philosophy in them. The intellect is instructed and expanded, the love of truth invigorated, the resolute endeavor after good is encouraged, and the whole man improved. The pure and holy Teacher from heaven did not disdain to appeal to the modest lily of the field and the winged denizens of the air, for the enforcement of a point of instruction. If Genius, then, as well as Piety, has so

uniformly been waked into exercise by external Nature, is it not a just inference that the Creator of mind and matter has established this law? that he has linked the outward to the inward by millions of cords too attenuated to be perceived by the common eye? Look forth, then, reader, upon the beauty of the season. Here is one of the serene and meek-eyed sisters of this lovely family, four in number, acknowledging a common Father, happy in his smile, living on his bounty, reflecting his glory. In the hand of this one you see a bunch of faded flowers. She received them from her gay and joyous sister, as she departed, but then they were in all their bloom and freshness. Now they are withered. The truth emblematically taught is, that "we all do fade as a leaf." Autumn would thus silently breathe into our hearts a lesson, which it is for the interest of all to learn.

If now we contemplate the forest or the field, as each begins to assume the autumnal hue, the idea of beauty still lingers in the mind. True, it is the beauty of the expiring year; but this heightens the emotion of the soul, as it would kindle at the spectacle of a dying believer, whose pallid features are illumined with the brightness of hope, or tremble with the ecstasy of joy.

Suggestion, too, comes in to aid the impression. If there was no expected spring, when all shall look green again, the spirit of melancholy might well come over us. But again will the youngest sister of the group return, wreathed in smiles and redolent of fragrance, to wake the echoes of the human heart. So there is a spring-time for mortal man, when the corruptible shall put on incorruption, and the mortal shall put on im-

mortality ;—when the animal shall be lost in the spiritual, the earthly absorbed in the heavenly, and DEATH swallowed up in VICTORY. It is the analogy of nature. It is applied by the Author of nature himself in the person of Jesus Christ. It is so beautiful a thought, that it is repeated by the Chief Apostle, and can never lose its interest.

The *beneficence* of the closing year is so well fitted to excite gratitude, that he who is a stranger to this emotion should suspect some mental or moral obliquity, and wonder that he can live in the midst of the works of God, without adoring God for his works. “The dread magnificence of heaven and earth” is before him. Who is to admire but intellectual man? Who shall love, if not affectionate woman? Let the return of autumn, then, raise every mind to God, and every heart to the work of a noble charity.

XVII.

The Last Day of Winter.

"The prompting seraph and the poet's lyre
Still sing the GOD OF SEASONS as they roll.
* * * * *
Such beauty and beneficence combined,
Shade, unperceived, so softening into shade,
And all so forming an harmonious whole,
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still."

THOMSON.

HE is speaking of the Seasons. They succeed each other not only in natural beauty, but with moral tendencies. Those only that so regard them will receive the benefit they are designed to bestow. In the smiles of Spring beams the *benevolence* of God; in the wonderful growth in Summer of all that belongs to the vegetable kingdom is seen the hiding of his *power*; in the abundance of Autumn, the *beneficence* of the Infinite Giver, who "opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing;" even in the sternness and rigidity of Winter appears that *conservative care* which never sleeps amid the wide-spread works of God.

Were I to advert to those moral qualities which the silent Seasons seem to teach, and even to exemplify, with Spring I should associate gentleness; with Summer, cheerfulness; sobriety with Autumn, and sublimity with Winter. The first revives; the second de-

lights; the third solemnizes; the last astonishes. Could we "enter into the treasures of the snow, or see the treasures of the hail," or inspect the imprisoned winds, we might form some idea of the truth of the last assertion. Henry Kirke White, in his hymn on the Omnipotence of God, inspired with the majesty of the theme, says:

'He yokes the whirlwind to his car,
And sweeps the howling skies.'

Such has been the past winter—stormy and severe; but it is now over and gone, and again have we reached the last day of the season. It seems a very short time since I presented my readers with an humble homily at the close of autumn; but Time, like Wealth, possesses a pair of swift wings, and, unlike all other wings, they are never at rest. Even while I write, our flight is still *onward*—to eternity! Oh, gentle reader! is it upward to heaven? Ask thy soul this pertinent question, and task thy soul faithfully till it is answered.

Has the winter which closes to-day been with thee a *contemplative* season? It is eminently fitted to be such. Cowper calls it the season of "fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness," and praises the comforts of "undisturbed retirement" which it affords. Hast thou improved the retirement? "I *muse* on the work of thy hands," said a holy man; "and *while* I was musing, the fire burned. Then spake I with my tongue: Lord, make me to know my *end*, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am." He means that the fire of true devotion

was, in the process of holy meditation, kindled in his heart; and, as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," so he could not help speaking of the brevity of life and approaching mortality. While he wore a crown, he remembered he must lay it at the feet of Death. Would that all crowned heads were thus thoughtful! But David also was a *father*, the head of a family, and as such returned from public cares "to bless his own household." Has the father who reads this been in the habit of praying in his family daily through this winter? Have you instructed your children during those long winter evenings? Has the mother, as she sung her evening lullaby over cradled infancy, lifted her heart to God for the eternal salvation of the being intrusted to her charge? Mother, that is an immortal treasure. Hold it as such. Handle it as such. Love it not to its destruction. Neglect it not to its ruin. Children! has filial obedience been your principle and your practice? Professor of religion! what hast *thou* done for the glory of God and the good of his Church?

Since our last interview, a *new year* has commenced. Reader, was it truly so to thee? New resolutions, new hopes, new fears, new joys, new desires, a **NEW HEART**—are all these true? Blessed be God, 1840 will not be forgotten by multitudes to whom it has already been a "year of the right hand of the Most High." It has been my satisfaction to witness some holy scenes this winter. The laboring zeal of Christ's ministers—the indefatigable activity of Christians—the exulting hopes of young converts—the anxious inquiries of the awakened—the fixed attention even of the

unawakened—these have manifested truly that the Spirit of the Lord has been abroad, especially in the cities, the fountains of good or evil. Multitudes have been gathered in, though, alas! multitudes also “behold, wonder, despise,” and, we fear, “will perish.”

While such have sought their pleasure in divine sources, others have made this a season of gay festivity. The siren voice of pleasure has lured many a poor sinner on to his doom; and many who began the winter in gayety and glee, have made their bed beneath its silent snows. Death is, indeed, the work of all seasons. As it is written in letters of iron on the “church-going bell” of my native parish,

“I to the church the living call,
And to the grave I summon all;”

and as that bell has tolled the knell of one generation, so it is every where. Even since I began to write this article, just as my pen had left on the paper the words above—*the exulting hopes of young converts*—an impenitent man knocked at my door, and requested me to go and see his wife die! I went, and beheld a scene, I will not say for a painter or a poet to describe, but for angels to wonder at:—a feeble woman in the embrace of death, but so perfectly happy, as not only to defy all the terrors of the formidable conqueror, but to subdue the very agonies of dissolving nature. And this was but a babe in Christ two or three years old! All were weeping but her, and she begged me to sing; for Jesus Christ had been pouring in such a stream of love as to overflow her whole soul, and she wanted a tongue to give expression to the ecstasy of her

feelings. I sung "Halleluiah to the Lamb who hath purchased our pardon," and "Oh grave, where is thy triumph now!" with other similar hymns, praising and praying, till her soul could commune with earth no more. Having accompanied her, as it were, to the gate of heaven, we descended with sorrowful steps to mingle again in earthly scenes. "Weep not for the dead in Christ."

But the great event of the season was that fatal catastrophe of the night of the thirteenth of January!*"Let that night be solitary. Let no joyful voice come therein." Who can forget it? Many a pillow has been wet with tears from eyes that never saw one of the sufferers in that dreadful conflagration. It is the tribute of nature to humanity. None of them did I know, but a brother's sorrow has saddened my heart. When the mind contemplates in detail the known or the possible circumstances of the scene, it shrinks convulsively from the view. There the fond mother and her little ones sunk in the deep waters together—the manly husband died with the warm, though despairing recollection of his wife and children around his heart—she that was a living bride, becomes the bride of death—helpless children are given up as victims to the angry wave—the old and the young, the gay and the grave, the prepared and the unprepared, the thoughtless sinner and the thoughtful Christian, all hastened together into eternity! What did they *then* think of the value of a HOPE IN CHRIST? Those who had it, tried its immortal worth, and it endured the trial. Those who had it not, tested its value by its

* Burning of the Lexington in Long Island Sound.

everlasting loss. They will return no more. The thousand bereaved friends "will go to them." The thousand eyes that have "wept sore" for the departed, will see them no more in the probationary land. As the dead, then, will not return to the living, let the living prepare to go to the dead. Ere another season shall revolve, beloved reader, the Son of man may call for you—perhaps one stroke of his providence may seal your eternal destiny. Not long had those of whom we have spoken exchanged the salutations of the New Year, before it was made known to them that they had reached the last year of their life.

One word in conclusion. Soon "the flowers will appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds will come." Sweet Spring will anew open her bright and beaming eye upon us, and appear dressed in her loveliest smiles. To-morrow, indeed, will be the first Sabbath of the vernal season. The first *Sabbath of the Spring!* It will give character to all the rest. Then rise early. Shut out the world. Shake off domestic cares. Be early at the feet of Jesus. Double your devotions. Be first at the Sabbath-school—first at the sanctuary—let your soul become fragrant with the incense of the temple, and that savor will cling to you through the week, perhaps through the season, and through the year!

XVIII.

The Last Day of the Year.

It is gone! The last month, the last week, the last day of another year! GONE, never, never to return. The record has been made, and will not be opened till we meet it at the judgment-seat of Christ.

“The golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years,”

speak to thoughtless mortals with a sublimity and power impressive, like all the works of God. They teach us to “measure our days,” and to meditate our end. Their glory shall depart when the “heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll,” but the glory of redeemed MIND can never be extinguished. From year to year, then, should it ascend in the scale of acquisition, and make the recollections of the past subservient to the improvement of the future. “’Tis greatly wise to talk of our past hours.” What *intellectual* acquisitions have you made? The treasures of that deep—*Time past*—are inexhaustible. Have you sought for them? Have your moral and intellectual powers been disciplined by healthful exercise?

The MEMORY—that statuary of the soul—ever employed in fixing, as in imperishable marble, the features of thought as they rise, has it well discharged its high duty? *Bene meminisse bene orasse—to remember well is to pray well.*

The IMAGINATION—the painter of the soul—has its pencil ever been dipped in pure and chaste colors? Its pictures—have they been such as the holy eye of an angel could look upon with a smile? O painter! thou paintest for eternity! Spirit of God! sanctify my imagination. Reader, the veil that conceals the inward scenery of thy soul is one day to be withdrawn, and those colors, durable beyond the achievements of ancient art, shall stand revealed to all.

The CONSCIENCE—that sleepless sentinel of God—that guardian of the most secret interests of the soul, that unprejudiced and faithful adviser of sinful man, that solitary witness of all within—hath it watched with an approving eye, its counsels followed, its vigilance blessed? Simplicity and godly sincerity! Conscience loves to testify to such.

The POWER OF CHOICE—hath it been exercised for the glory of Him who bestowed it? Of the countless multitudes of objects presented to it, how many have been wisely chosen? The volitions of a single year! The eternity of how many hangs upon them! The poet Cowper, ever thoughtful and practical, as well as tender and imaginative, thus writes:

“The lapse of time and rivers is the same,
Both speed their journey with a restless stream;
The silent pace with which they steal away,
No wealth can bribe, no prayers persuade to stay.
Alike irrevocable both when past,
And a wide ocean swallows both at last.
Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound,
How laughs the land with various plenty crowned!
But *time*, that should enrich the nobler mind,
Neglected, leaves a dreary waste behind.”

How has the current of life the past year affected us? Many who read this will think of their afflictions. Mother, thou hast given to the cold bosom of the earth that sweet one, not long since pillowed on thine own. Well, what saith the Father of infinite love—what saith He, who died for you and me? “In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father, who is in heaven.” Are not the spirits of the early dead well provided for? Thou hast the privilege of watching over the dust. Thou couldst not take care of the spirit. Angels are commanded to do that, and after a few revolving suns, will present thee the cherub of thy heart, beautiful with the light of heaven, and blooming with its immortality, an heir of redeeming love forever!

It may be that the manly father and revered head of your family has fallen by the stroke of death. Many an obituary of this kind has—shall I say gilded or saddened that never vacant column of the journals? It is a joyful record when we think of them as the dead in Christ, for “to depart and be with Christ is far better” for them than to continue their pilgrimage in this dark world of sin and woe; but then how needful they seemed to their own dear circle, to the struggling Church of God, and to us all! Many ministers have gone from different *schools*, but the only question asked at the gate of heaven was, *Did you belong to the school of Christ?* Pious and devoted elders, too, have bid farewell to the church militant below, to join the church triumphant above. I think of one to whom I could erect a monument, not in obedience to custom, but in the fullness of devoted affection; not to eulogize the dead, but to admonish the living; not to magnify his

virtues, but to awaken those of the living. His home was his delight—the mother of his children his joy—the children of that mother his hope; his house the abode of piety and peace—his living presence its brightest light—his dying hour its darkest affliction. From that couch of patient suffering Hope, assured by Faith and winged with Love, seemed to ascend to heaven and to rejoice in the Resurrection and the Life.

“Is that a death-bed where the Christian lies?

Yes, but not his—’tis Death itself there dies!”



XIX.

The Opening Year.

To a reflecting mind, nothing earthly can be more impressive than the flight of Time. Hence the frequent and striking images drawn from this idea in the Holy Scriptures. Hence, also, the strong and urgent practical inferences deduced from this fact in the same instructive volume. “The time is *short*. It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away.” How true and striking this synopsis of man’s earthly relations and obligations! The inhabitants of this world, amid all their busy cares, joys,

and sorrows, must not forget that a higher and nobler care, a superior joy, and a more salutary sorrow, should possess their hearts. Even in this short sketch the family group is introduced. It is in the foreground of the picture, and a softened shadow rests upon it. Even the tender impulses of domestic affection must be so tempered by an ever vital and vigilant piety, as not to be too sorely wounded by the sudden rupture of the ties that bind us to earth. Our dearest treasures must be so possessed and enjoyed, as that their instant surrender would not seriously derange the harmony of our moral existence. The opening year brings to thousands many sad, as well as joyous recollections. The images of the departed rise up before memory's pensive eye, a solemn train. They seem to connect themselves by a kind of mysterious, yet indissoluble, bond with the opening year. They demand a place in our recollections. They seem to prove by the secret influence they exert upon us the immortality of the departed spirit. They cannot be called the wrecks which Time, in his passage, has strewn around. It is the body alone which is in ruins. The grave is the true landmark, ever before our eyes, of the territorial limits of the monarch with the "black diadem." Widely extended is the reign of Death, but he hath no power over the soul. Our friends are said to die, but it is only to live, and to live with Jesus in heaven if they lived to him on earth. What life is, we are impressively taught at the close of each revolving year. This is a lesson of Time. What it *will* be, Eternity alone can adequately reveal.

No year passes without serious alterations and mutations in the family circle. Oh, husband! thou hast

transferred the wife of thine own bosom to the cold bosom of the grave. God hath "taken away from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke." Thou art written a widower. Hast thou so lived as to meet this affliction with tranquillity and fortitude? Dost thou resign thyself to it in the true spirit of a Christian? When the beloved Rachel died (and it was amid the most affecting circumstances she was called away), her husband Jacob erected over her grave a column, which was a memorial at once of the affection of the living and the virtues of the dead. Centuries after, "Rachel's sepulcher in the borders of Benjamin" (the very name of her last-born child) was familiarly spoken of by the inhabitants of the land. "The memory of the just is blessed." If thou hast given into God's hands the spirit of a saint, thanksgiving should well up in thy heart for the perfected immortality of the treasure intrusted for a while to thee. Art thou a believer? Let faith and patience now have their perfect work. Art thou impenitent? Let thy heart melt in godly sorrow under the discipline of this providence. Commend thy motherless children to the God of the covenant, and *live for their salvation*. Thus will you live to the glory of God.

Reader, art thou a mother? wast thou a wife, but has the past year bereaved thee of thy husband? Then would I commend thee with double earnestness to the prayers of all Christian readers of these pages. Few there are who have duly weighed the burden of the widow, on whom, along with the weight of affliction, is devolved the double responsibilities of a father and mother, now that the husband and father is taken

away. True, a declaration of marvelous import is made to her; a pledge of infinite love, securing inestimable blessings, is tendered at the very threshold of the opening grave: "Thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name." This promise has imparted unspeakable strength and support to hearts that would otherwise have sunk in rayless despair. But how much faith it requires amid the perplexities and embarrassments of the widowed state, and the polite indifference or positive coldness of the world, to appropriate the promises of the covenant, and deeply to feel that we are not "to live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!" Widowed mother! though a dark cloud may now hang over your prospects, be not discouraged; trust in that God who charged his people by positive statute "not to afflict *any* widow or fatherless child," and who declared *he* would vindicate their cause. He said also by the mouth of his servant, Paul, that the "widow indeed trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day." Thus did Anna, the evening of whose life closed in such cloudless serenity, giving sweet, celestial tokens that the morning of her eternity would be ushered in amid gladness and glory. Long did that lovely saint, whose cherished home was the house of God, maintain the conflict of life, to win at last that imperishable crown which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Oh, light afflictions! that herald an inheritance of such an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Let nothing shake your faith in your Redeemer, who is mighty. Often are ye the chosen ones to bless the Church with some of its noblest instrument-

alities. Even for this world, about which some natural anxieties will arise in your hearts, God's vigilant bounty will make all due provisions. I know a mother, who, bereaved of her husband, was left with a legacy of six sons and poverty, while the sons of her rich neighbor inherited each a "fortune." The pious widow lived to see all her sons prosperous and respected, and the sons of her neighbor, alas! ruined and blotted from among the living. Once the objects of envy, they speedily became the objects of alternate pity, scorn, and contempt. She arose, and blessed God that he had denied to her wealth, while he had vouchsafed faith and fidelity.

It may be that amid the vicissitudes of the departed year, you have been called to mourn the death of a dear child. Well, the "times" of those we love, as well as our own, "are in thy hands," O Lord! The sympathies of Him, the crucified One, are warming toward you. His hand holds the cup of affliction to your lips, and many a drop of consolation will he infuse into it. He will not, at present, as he did to the widow of Nain, restore your child to your grieved bosom, but to your faith he will do more—send the Comforter to be ever with you. Richest blossoms of hope and love often spring up beneath the portals of the tomb. Be not like Paulina, who, at the death of every child, nursed her grief to such excess that she almost wept her heart away, and would fain die on the very margin of the grave of each loved one. Let not thy tears bitterly reproach, but rather bear a tender tribute to the wisdom and the will of Him who loves while he chastises. There is comfort and beauty on earth, as well as

in heaven, though not in perfection here, as there. Look aloft to the summer sky, when the rainbow spans with its bright arch the distant forest. Behold those beautiful dyes penciled by the secret, silent hand of God. See color blending into color, a vision of exquisite loveliness! Now turn your eye to the earth in her summer pride, and behold the many-colored flowers planted on her bosom by the same divine hand, warmed by the same sun, and watered by the same drops, under the influence of which the gorgeous structure was created. Is there a single color wanting? Do not they answer, one by one, to the dyes of heaven? Herein is a lesson. The graces of Heaven are reflected even from earth, and all to lead us back to glory.

Time is bearing us on. To us may this year be full of spiritual joy and individual usefulness!

XX.

The Sabbath-Day.

LET us all so call it hereafter. It is altogether an appropriate designation. The public mind is waking up to promote its observance. A few thoughts here may be seasonable. "We never," says Dr. Chalmers, "in the whole course of our recollections, met with a Christian friend, who bore upon his character every other evidence of the Spirit's operation, who did not remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." This testimony is true. Here is an institution established by

the law of Heaven. It completely adapts itself to the physical, intellectual, and moral nature of man. The great Expounder of law declared that "*the Sabbath was made for MAN.*" This is the key to the whole matter. If for universal man—if no age, no generation of men be excepted, then, like redemption, it must necessarily be coeval with the existence of man. We should expect that such a law, being at all times necessary to man, would be enacted from the beginning and duly published as the ordinance of Heaven. If rest for the body, repose for the intellect, and a pause for the improvement of our moral nature, be necessities at one time, they are at all times. The particular day for Sabbath sanctification, as distributed into minutes and seconds, is not the main point. The very structure of the globe renders identity in time a natural impossibility. But the hallowed INSTITUTION—that is it; the holy, immutable, unrepealable law of God, which, equally with the other nine precepts of the Decalogue, is founded in the nature of God, and fitted to the nature of man. "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made." This law is just as requisite to men as the commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.* Indeed, if any of the ten illustrious enactments of the government of God may claim a lofty precedence in the view of the human race, it is the Fourth and the Fifth, which enjoin—the one, honor to God as the Lord of the Sabbath; the other, honor to parents as his representatives on earth. Both of them would be perfectly appropriate to man in his unfallen state, even amid the

bloom and beauty of Paradise ere the sanctity of his nature had been defiled by the touch of sin, and the rampant corruptions of his heart and life had demanded that God should say in penal tones: Thou shalt *not* bow down to idols—not kill—not steal—not commit adultery! These precepts seem to have been framed to meet the monstrous developments of human depravity that had risen in the face of Heaven. But the Sabbath—it smiled in Paradise itself. Its bright sun gilded the innocence of man. Its gentle gales, in the language of Milton,

“Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispensed
Native perfumes, and whispered whence they stole
Those balmy spoils.”

The Sabbath, with its twin sister, MARRIAGE, dwelt within the gates of Paradise before the Cherubim and “double-flaming sword” were assigned their awful ministry at those gates, in consequence of the fall of them to whom these blessed institutions were given, but from whose posterity Heaven did not in its wrath withdraw them. That “perpetual fountain of domestic sweets” has never been dried up: that “mysterious law, wedded love,” has never ceased to operate, and thus these ancient, heaven-born blessings have survived the desolations of every age. As they were the first to be bestowed on the race of men, they will be the last to be withdrawn from them. Not until the last groan of expiring nature shall die upon the ear of listening worlds, will their auspicious influence cease. When all “the people of God” shall have attained to that “rest that remaineth for them,” and they shall have

“become like unto the angels” in that pure world where “they shall die no more,” as they shall no more “marry nor be given in marriage,” then, and not till then, shall these institutions cease, for then only will their reason cease. Nothing can be clearer than that both these laws of Heaven are absolutely necessary to the peace, beauty, and order of society, and to the happiness of mankind; that properly observed, they tend to promote the moral, intellectual, social, and spiritual improvement of those who are under the government of a holy God; that they are among the strongest safeguards of mental and moral purity: that he, therefore, who attempts to subvert their authority, or to impair their influence, strikes at the glory of God and at the happiness of his fellow-men, and thus declares himself an enemy to God and man. He would insult Heaven and despoil earth: blot out the mercy of the one and extinguish the hopes of the other. Combine these two ideas that came from God—the SABBATH and the FAMILY. Think of a sanctified Sabbath in a pious family. It is an image—shaded, indeed—of heaven. A sweet dawn blushing into a cloudless day. Domestic life has no beauty like that which a well-spent Sabbath sheds upon it; no fruits so fair as those that grow on this heavenly tree; no blessings so rich, and pure, and permanent, as those which flow through this celestial channel.

As by the constitution of God this law of the Sabbath has no limitation within itself, so it has never been the subject of a divine abrogation. If so, where is the record? When was it repealed? Men in their madness have decreed its extinction, and the earth

drank their blood! The dreadful blow they leveled at God's institution instantly dissolved the ligaments of society, and upturned the foundations of virtue and order. Anarchy sat enthroned amid the terrific gloom of this deed of Atheism. It was such an experiment on the patience of Heaven as the world will not soon forget, nor men be inclined to repeat. All sanctities were then violated, all obligations of justice, love, and mercy were repealed; but the law of God is still paramount, and "all the earth shall be filled with his glory." The sun of the Sabbath still shines on this happy land, and it shall spread its healing rays over all lands. In the beautiful language of Robert Hall, with which I conclude: "The vapors which gather round the rising sun, and follow it in its course, seldom fail at the close of it to form a magnificent theater for its reception, and to invest with variegated tints, and with a softened effulgence, the luminary which they cannot hide!"



XXI.

The Sabbaths of the Last Year.

THE year 1843 had one blessed peculiarity. It began with the Sabbath: it ended with the Sabbath. That gem of heaven adorned its opening and its close. Its dawning light was that of the best and brightest day of the week. Its parting ray was of the same—calm, holy, divine. So let our reflections be. Fifty-three

Sabbaths blessed the last year. We rejoiced in its young hours. We admired its early bloom and its advancing maturity, and we beheld its decline. How graceful, yet how grand and awful, its progress! It pauses not for the convenience of mortals. It adjusts not its steady and majestic march to the fancies or the desires of reluctant men. Onward, onward, as the strong and resistless tide to the ocean, is its unresting movement. It sweeps along in solemn silence, with ages in its rear and eternity before it—bearing on its bosom that living burden, which, true to its trust, it will unlade in other worlds, to receive in exchange, from the hand of God, its own dissolution, when its course is finished, and its work done.

I seem to hear the voices of beings floating on the summit of that tide in all the variety of their joy and woe. I heard the shout of childhood in its thoughtless glee, but it suddenly ceased. This was its year! That beautiful boy will be missing from the domestic circle when the New Year begins. I saw a lovely maiden—her eye beamed with pleasure—her cheek was flushed with hope—her whole form like that of a fairy, as she bounded over the wave in her frail bark! I heard a shriek. She had sunk to rise no more! Old age, too, tottered along the same deck that was loaded with infancy and youth. Some were tired of life. Others clung to it with the tenacity of desperation. Some died with a smile of glory illumining their features. Others exhibited the frightful contortions of despair. In many, hope and horror appeared to struggle for the ascendancy, but the contest was soon decided. There was a dash beneath the wave, and the parted waters

closing again locked up the secret. I pitied the weepers that survived. They seemed to long to die with their friends, willing that this should be the last year of their troubled life. A venerable woman, whose mortal tabernacle had outlived the vitality of her mind, was happy to obtain her release. But her son went along with her, himself the father of three manly youths, all of whom soon followed. The seal of death was placed on each brow, and they have gone to the land of spirits.

Oh, Time! if thou art the daughter of Love and Hope, at whose birth angels rejoiced, thou art the mother of Truth and Grief, and all inevitable realities; the companion of Death, and the purveyor of the Grave. A benevolent God created Time for his own glory, and for the good of all intelligent beings who should form a part of its empire; and the creation of man inspired witnessing angels with the hope of a holy happiness, not inferior to their own, with this extraordinary addition, that it was to be transmitted from generation to generation, till the morning ray of the world's first day should spread itself out into a vast flood of glory, and Time should be lost in Eternity. Another year has accomplished its task toward this result.

And how have my Sabbaths been spent? What deeds of mercy have they recorded? What spirit of devotion have they witnessed? What strains of holy praise have been upborne to heaven on the breath of the Sabbath morning? What in the soft twilight of its evening? Ye ministers of Christ, how have you discharged your high duties on that day? Have you

lived for God or your own reputation? Can the Lord's day testify to the Lord's work among you? Have the people of God been joyful in the house of prayer, because converts were multiplied? Are you thankful for *preserving* grace? Some, alas! of those once numbered with you have fallen from their high estate into the horrible pit and miry clay of abominations, where they lie writhing in the snare of the devil. Angels are ready to weep at such atrocious folly and wickedness. The Church sits in sackcloth. Her enemies laugh. They say, "Aha! aha! our eye hath seen it." These sinners against their own souls, and all that is good and lovely in heaven or on earth, have poured misery and anguish into tender bosoms that loved them, trusted in them, and lived for them. The innocent, injured wife and little ones may truly say: "You have fed us with the bread of tears, and given us tears to drink in great measure." Oh, thou God of them that are more than bereaved of husband and father (death were a luxury to this), shield their unoffending heads from the universal scorn that descends on the apostate, with whom in an evil hour their interests were linked! Give them the oil of joy for mourning. And "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

There is one class of men at least that cannot commit a small sin! Woe! woe to him that gashes the bosom of the Church! When God maketh inquisition for blood, well may that supplication be offered: "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation."

Our Sabbaths, like the Sibylline leaves, grow more precious as they decrease. So ought we, as our earthly

years decline, esteem those that remain more and more valuable, paying "no moment but for its worth, and what its worth ask death-beds." Our tree of life should bear twelve manner of fruits, and should yield her fruit every month, so that at the close of the year it could be said, that we had "glorified our Father by bringing forth much fruit," even such as should be "unto eternal life."

The Sabbath, unquestionably divine in its origin, should, for another reason, be regarded with increasing reverence and delight. Prelatical men, with an infatuation almost incredible, are endeavoring to reinflct the superstitions of the dark ages upon the emancipated church of Christ. They are beginning to reload the calendar with saints' days and festivals. Poor plodders! Go to Rome at once and worship the shadows already sanctified and canonized by the Queen of the Seven Hills. Go and see how the shades of the three hundred and sixty-five saints overshadow the brightness of the Lord's Day, which is desecrated and carnalized to the lowest degree of profanation in all your Romanized countries. Will you talk of the venerable antiquity of those rites? You will find a more ancient antiquity in heathen lands, among heathen priests. But no! we cling to the Christian's Sabbath—sweet day of rest from secular toil—of labor for God. Let the true Church be faithful to this day, and she is safe—the land is safe—the world is safe.

XXII.

The Six Mornings.

‘The morning cometh.’—ISAIAH.

THERE has ever been connected, in my mind, something solemn and interesting with the idea of *morning*. The morning is a creation of God. “From everlasting or ever the earth was,” the infinite mind conceived the beautiful idea. The first expression of that idea was at the birth of the material world. Then, we are sublimely informed in the most ancient book extant in the world, when God laid the corner-stone of the earth, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” That was indeed a glorious morning. It was the first dawn of heaven’s blessed light upon the long night of chaos. It was an outflowing of the *infinitely benevolent* mind. “He spake ; it was done. He commanded ; it stood fast.” Which is the more sublime, that just quoted, or this : “God said, Let LIGHT be, and light WAS ?” Language cannot go beyond this. “And the evening and the morning were the first day.” That was a holy day. Sin had not been born. The Son of God had long anticipated the coming of this morning, the creation of man, his own fellowship with humanity, and the subsequent wonders, which omniscience foresaw, prophecy foretold, and time unfolded. Read Proverbs viii. 23–31. Angels beheld the scene with a pure and vivid delight. But that morning was soon

clouded, and a long dark night succeeded, occasionally indeed relieved by rays of the light from heaven, but for the most part shrouding the population of the earth. Good men still looked forward to another morning, as the hope of the world, and spoke of a "Sun of righteousness that should arise with healing in his beams." To the hoping and the desponding they continually said, "*The morning cometh.*"

That second morning finally came. It was the *morning of* THE WORLD'S REDEMPTION. The Son of God was born. There was a jubilee in heaven. The event was celebrated on the plains of Bethlehem. Earth rejoiced. Angels descended to mingle their congratulations with the children of men on this auspicious event, and sang in their ears some of heaven's sweetest swelling anthems. "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good-will to men." They came from afar to witness the scenes, and guided by a miraculous star, found him of whom the prophet spake when he said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace!" Wonderful indeed! Prophecy was now fulfilled. Types were accomplished. The pillars of superstition trembled. The voice of the oracles was silent. The foundations of idolatry quaked. The thrones of earth shook with fear. Kings were troubled, and all their subjects with them.—Matt. ii. 3. But the good and the holy rejoiced. Their souls magnified the Lord, and hailed the advent of God their Saviour. The hearts of the young leaped for gladness. The aged died for very joy. Now was come salvation. Then indeed, O Zion, "thy light broke forth as the

morning." Thou didst "arise and shine, thy light being come, and the glory of the Lord having risen upon thee." Who but the God incarnate would presume to say, "I am the light of the world?" For a season that celestial orb was quenched in preternatural night. The hopes of the pious sunk. The disciples despaired, but soon it reappeared on *the morning of the resurrection.*

This was the *third* morning of which I speak. The Prince of Peace was imprisoned in the tomb. The hope of a lost world was inhumed in that sepulcher. The enemies of God had sealed it. The armed guards of hell surrounded it. To keep that prisoner secure was vital to the cause of Satan, who had thus far succeeded in betraying, condemning and executing the guiltless Lamb of God. To release him was indispensable to the completion of the mighty work of redemption. Here, then, was a crisis of eternal moment to millions of immortal beings. Here was a point of time in which were concentrated the interests of myriads of the human race. Towards that lowly sepulcher the eyes of all beings were turned from every quarter of the universal empire of Jehovah. A transaction was impending, which would arrest the attention and enchain the wonder of heaven, earth, and hell. The foundation or the fall of an empire were a trifle to this, for the corner-stone of ETERNAL REDEMPTION was now to be laid.—Ps. cxviii. 22-24. At length the appointed hour arrived. The morning of that memorable day dawned. An angel descended from heaven. He alighted at the tomb. The ground trembled beneath his tread. The guards fell prostrate before him. They could not look upon a countenance which, though lovely as a vision of heaven

to the holy, was terrific as the lightning to the wicked. He broke the seal of the tomb, calmly rolling away the stone from its place, and reverently waited till the Lord of angels came forth. He came! Heaven shouted for joy. Hell groaned from her deepest caverns. The battle was now fought, the victory won. From this, the lowest depth of his humiliation, the conquering Saviour rose, never more to die! *There* was power, calm, deep, unimpassioned, irresistible! The last hope of the apostate enemies of God then expired. The first hope then kindled into a deathless flame in the bosoms of his hitherto desponding friends. The darkness was past. The day had dawned. The morning of the world's Sabbath had come, and He, who was the Resurrection and the Life, claimed it as his own.

But there was another bright morning not far distant—*that of the first great effusion of the Spirit*. It was seven weeks, or fifty days after the preceding event, that the humble, hated followers of Jesus were met to promote his cause. They had been praying much. Perhaps they spent all the previous night in prayer, having assembled, tradition says, in the house of Mary, the mother of John, on Mount Sion. It was the Sabbath, and at the hour of nine in the morning, a sudden and sublime sound was heard; the place was filled with a holy influence; God the Spirit was there; the tongues of cloven flame sat upon them; they preached with a fluency and power that astonished all; the hearts of thousands were convulsed with spiritual distress; it was the first Gospel revival; it was a glorious morning! That day eternal life dawned on multitudes of individual souls. That was a blessed day for the Church of God.

Its resplendent light will be reflected across the sea of time down to its latest point, till time shall be no longer. The first fruits of redemption were then gathered. Jesus and the Crucifixion—Jesus and the Resurrection, were the themes of the burning eloquence of those devoted preachers. Then, too, prophecy was fulfilled, even that which had been uttered eight hundred years before, by one of the Lord's prophets.—Joel ii. 28, 32.

Four mornings, then, are past: Creation, Redemption, Resurrection, and Regeneration; these are matters of sacred history, and of everlasting recollection. Two are yet to come, the morning of the *millennium* and of the *general resurrection*. The first is at hand. The way is preparing. "The kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom will soon be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." The "sure word of prophecy," which never failed as to the past, will not fail as to the future. "The morning cometh." There is the beginning of great changes. Many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increased. The Bible will soon be read in every language. The power of the press will be mightily unfolded. That irrepressible flame, the love of Christ, which stimulates the soul of the missionary to such deeds of noble daring and holy suffering, is spreading from heart to heart. The materials are preparing for such a spiritual temple, as in its glory will transcend every structure that God has ever reared on earth. Its light will be not merely as "the light of the sun compared with that of the moon," but as the light of seven suns, constellated in a glorious firmament, to show forth the wisdom, power, and love of God to the ends of the earth. It was for the unfolding of the

scenes of that morning that the sublimities of creation itself had their birth (Rev. iv. 11); that Redemption was finished on Calvary, and that the Resurrection and the Life triumphed over the grave, for the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day; in the greatness of his strength will he lead captivity captive, and distribute spiritual gifts among the regenerated population of this world, like the drops of the morning dew. Come then, illustrious day, when the covenant people, though now banished and scattered, shall be "received again," and be as "life from the dead" to the Gentiles, "and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

The LAST MORNING which will dawn on this sublunary world will be that of the GENERAL RESURRECTION. Dark will be the night, long will be the sleep of the silent grave. The moldering generations of the human race will have reposed for ages in their deep oblivion beneath the surface of the earth. But above that surface the busy scenes of life will have still been enacted. Trace the retrospective history of man through any given period of time. Wars raged—empires fell—monarchs were dethroned—garments were rolled in blood. Or the arts of peace prevailed. Science flourished—literature delighted—invention astonished—wealth flowed like a river of gold—the luxurious reveled in their pleasures—the infidel sneered—the atheist scoffed; they asked, "Where is the promise of his coming?" As in the degenerate days of Noah, as in the fearful, fatal days of declining Jerusalem, they will be "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage," forgetting God and walking after their own lusts; the rich period

of heaven's mercy and of earth's holiness will have past; the fury of Satan will again have broken forth, and the armed legions of hell will have rushed to their last desperate struggle against the throne of God, when the angel standing upon the sea and upon the earth, shall lift his hand to heaven, and swear that *there shall be time no longer!* Then will the archangel's trumpet sound its loud and resistless summons through all the length and breadth of the dominions of death. The graves will open. The dead will rise. Saints will rejoice. Sinners will tremble. The sun will be turned to blackness—the moon to blood—the stars will fall from heaven—the powers of heaven will be shaken. The knell of time will be tolled to listening worlds. The fires of the final conflagration will begin to burn. Shouts of joy will greet the second advent of the Son of God. Shrieks of horror will proclaim the enthronement of the Judge, to pronounce the last judgment of the court of heaven on the guilty, the impenitent, the unpardoned. Oh, what a day! What a scene! Here all description fails. All conception tires and faints! But this we know. That will be the morning of an everlasting day to the people of God, but of clouds and thick darkness to the wicked. Impenitent sinner! By all that is true and all that is terrible in that impending day, I entreat you instantly to flee to the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal salvation! “Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch!”

XXIII.

The Spirit of Beauty.

THERE is in man a something which responds with various emotion to the influence of that which has been called the Spirit of Beauty. This mysterious influence may flow from something without him, or it may arise, as by the instinct of genius, within his own bosom, stirring that internal deep which the line of created thought has not yet fathomed.

The elements of this spirit, however ethereal, are real; if evanescent in one form, they are reproduced in another; exciting the imagination, elevating the tone of moral feeling, and often, as sweet music falls upon the ear, leaving the most delicious sensations around the heart. A charm is breathed through the soul, which, if it does not extinguish the consciousness of the mortality that surrounds it, creates a higher sense of the spiritual destiny that awaits it. Let him who would feel the power of this influence walk abroad in a calm summer's night, till he stands alone in the great temple of nature, a serene silent worshiper. The spirit of beauty will meet him! It will smile upon him, as it did on the sweet Psalmist of Israel, from the starry heavens. It will recall the forms of those he loved—forms now sleeping in the bosom of the earth on which he treads. It will rise before him in every object that is linked with some tender association. His heart trembles with delight.

Let us now change the scene. It is morning—morning on the hills. The light is dawning up that declivity, where the visitor often sported away so many of the rosy hours of childhood. Years of sorrow may have intervened, deadening the primitive hopes and chilling the early aspirations of his heart. But behold the spirit of beauty is there, unsullied by the storms of life, undecayed by the lapse of time; beckoning him near her, as she sits enthroned amid the woods and waters. There amid those shades he reclined his youthful limbs, when the very sense of existence was bliss. In that clear stream he slaked his burning thirst. Those scenes he now lives over again. He repeats the ceremony, and it fills his soul with joy. Beautiful land! he exclaims. No other spot of earth is so fair.

There are dreams of the poet, in which the same “heavenly maid” appears, revealing thoughts and images reserved for a chosen few. It is the secondary inspiration of man.

“Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast— * * *
Thou wert a beautiful thought and softly bodied forth.”

It is the prerogative of genius to be highly associated. The rank which it holds is not an artificial elevation. It is the gift of God. It is an order instituted by the Author of intellect. Its secrets have not only not been communicated, but they are incommunicable. Of the millions who eat food and breathe air, a few only are admitted into this order. To them the “sweet creations” are revealed. In them the “beautiful thought” glows.

As the prophet saw the winged horses and glittering chariots of the hosts in the air, invisible to others, so to their vision is imparted the wonders of the world of imagination.

Of one of these peers of the realm of imagination—Spenser—it has been said by another—Campbell—“We shall nowhere find more airy and expansive images of visionary things, a sweeter tone of sentiment, or a finer flush in the colors of language, than in this Rubens of English poetry.” To such the spirit of beauty appears, sometimes when wrapped in the abstractions of poetic meditation at home, sometimes when making their excursions abroad. They find her amid congenial localities—as they wander by the margin of the glassy lake—or toil up the mountain steep—or gaze on the many-colored heavens—or repose amid the decaying monuments of ancient art, or contemplate the “human face divine,” especially in that softer mold, where Milton—as in his Eve—beheld a charm beyond the reach of art, and a grace to be sketched only by his immortal pencil. That modern bard, who lingered amid the ruins of Rome, “the Niobe of nations,” till the fountain of inspiration within him gushed forth, scattering its golden spray on every column, arch, temple, and tomb that had been spared by the tooth of Time, might have charmed the very spirit of beauty herself in such scenes, but for that chronic scowl which disfigured the face of his genius. Not in vain was she courted amid Italian scenes by a true lover, the author of *Human Life*,* in whose poetry there is such a quiet depth of sensibility and reflection, as to give back with photographic exactness

* Rogers.

the images of nature without a ruffle or a stain. And that popular couplet is now running the whole circle of the English language :

“ Campbell's no more—his elder, Rogers, lives :
Thus HOPE departs—while MEMORY survives.”

And yet hope has not departed. The spirit of beauty lives in the Pleasures of Hope, as it does in the Pleasures of Memory. The forms of the authors must be folded in the melancholy drapery of the tomb, but their works live. Over them death hath no power—the grave no supremacy. And among the pleasures of memory will be this—that we have read the work of that name ; among those of hope, that some other Campbell will arise to hold, like him, communion with a muse, that shall dictate no line, which “ dying he would wish to blot.”

Nor less earnestly does the painter realize the presence of that power which comes to men in so many forms. If his be not pre-eminently a beautiful art, the epithet is unmeaning. In the profound musings of his genius, he perceives qualities in things which escape the observation of the superficial or unpracticed mind. The spirit of beauty dwells in his thoughts—teaches him how to combine—to contrast—to group—to color—to impress the very image of thought on the faces of the canvas—and as if by miracle to breathe itself into the inanimate figures that rise under his plastic hand. So the sculptor transmits through ages the enduring memorials of his genius. But this he could not do were not that genius so conversant with the spirit of beauty, that with wonderful skill it guides the hand that chisels out those varying forms.

It abounds in the material creation, and hence the genius of poetry has not failed to scan this department of the works of God with a glowing eye and a burning heart. The spirit of beauty dwells in the flower—hence by a universal law of the imagination, it is claimed as one of the materials out of which the web of poesy is constructed. This can excite no surprise when it is considered how fine is the combination of properties in this little gem of creation. Grace of form is finely developed—brilliancy or blandness of color strikes the eye—the power of fragrance often wakens another sense, and then, more than all, the *disposition* of parts—the symmetrical distribution of all the constituent attributes, together with their endless variety, reveal the loveliest traits of beauty. And that beauty awakens a delicious sentiment, as well in the mind of a child as in that of a philosopher. The one enjoys the rapture of a rose even more than the scientific botanist, who can invent names and demonstrate properties. The most scanty reader of poetry must have observed how strong and universal is the impression produced on the poetic imagination by the rose, the lily, or any similar development of nature, which appeals to the sense of enjoyment in man. This fact, and myriads like it, compel us to exclaim, How much natural beauty survives the moral desolation of this world! While the heart of the great Teacher of men wept out its sorrows over the ruins of humanity, his pure and spotless imagination drank with delight the spirit of beauty in the flower of the field. “*Consider*,” said he, “the lilies of the field. And then he recalls the admiring view of his hearers from the splendor of the imperial robe to the superior beauty of that

little gem on the bosom of nature, too, exquisite in its construction and coloring to be successfully imitated by the highest achievements of art. "Solomon *in all his glory* was not arrayed like one of these!"

Among the endowments of a pre-eminent genius we find that conceptions of the loftiest sublimity are associated with those of soft and tender beauty. The page of Milton presents one of these high examples. That of David another, whose muse rose to regions of the sublimest thought with a grandeur equalled only by the gracefulness with which she descended to the minuter beauties of the world below. This is the true harmony of our imaginative being. It is a kind of symphony of the intellectual and moral powers, which elevates the soul to high communion with its Author. If there be few who can execute such compositions, what multitudes can enjoy them! If it be given to but few to develop the spirit of beauty, how many are delighted with that development! We need not even go beyond the limits of sweet domestic life. The bounding footstep of the little cherub that darts across the floor attracts your attention. Look at that rosy cheek—that dimpled smile—that kindling eye—even that auburn curl wrought into its graceful curve by the fingers of nature. There is separate beauty in each; but when combined, how fine the impression! It is enough to exhilarate even the spirit of a cynic. If to all this we add the charm of *resemblance*, the effect is greatly heightened.

Suppose now the mother of that little child enters, and you have never before seen her. There is no need to inquire who she is. The one is the miniature reflection

of the other. There is not only a transcription of the maternal features, but there is a transmission of the very spirit and expression of the one to the other. It is one of the delicate and beautiful achievements of nature, and the *artist*, with instinctive sagacity, has not failed to seize upon it, and convert it into a triumph of his art. Not the painter alone, who loves thus to copy nature, but the poet also, whose imaginative eye instantly discerns the beautiful in objects, whether it be positive or comparative, has illustrated this subject. If to these ideas be added another—to shade the picture—the idea of widowhood—if that little one be fatherless, then the whole assumes a pensive cast and coloring which augments the power of the impression. Scenes like these awoke the most tender strains of Mrs. Hemans, whose muse loved to retire from the broad sunlight of the imagination, and amid the solemn shadows of the grove or the glade, dwell on thoughts as solemn, yet impassioned like her own genius. To a deceased child :

“No bitter tears for thee be shed
Blossom of being ! Vision of beauty ·
Whose all of life—a rosy ray,
Blushed into dawn and passed away.”

The fable of Niobe has awakened the power of the chisel, which imparted new beauty to the main thought—maternal grief—while the cause of it is kept out of view. Poetry has given an awful expansion to this thought in those well-known lines, applied to Rome :

“The Niobe of NATIONS ! there she stands,
Childless and crownless in her voiceless woe ;
An empty urn within her withered hands.”

The same poet, in describing the cataract of Velino, which of course embraces chiefly the elements of the sublime, though at an humble distance from our own mighty Niagara, does not forget to paint the rainbow, that arches the tremendous surge, like "Hope upon a death-bed," whose hues never fade, whose dyes are never washed out by the flood of waters. O, had he, that strange Byron, who had such a keen perception of the grand and the lovely in nature and in art, but elevated his soul to higher themes—had he but wet his burning lips in that fountain of Siloa, fast by the oracle of God, how would the fever of his soul been cooled and cured! To what summits of regal power in the empire of mind—of song—of hallowed intellect, might he not have ascended! But see him like "Archangel ruined." And yet the spirit of beauty lives in those works, and those alone, which are untainted with the feculent impurities that have turned the others to putrescence.



XXIV.

Beauty and Goodness.

AMID all the deformity of this world, there is much beauty. It greets us at our entrance into it, even before we have power to appreciate it, as in a mother's smile, itself the expression of perhaps the deepest emotion of which our moral nature is capable; and a father's joy, which is awakened by the new fact of our in-

dividual existence. A happy constitution it is, that to the child the mother always looks beautiful, unless she violates some precept of that decalogue of affections which the finger of God has inscribed on the "fleshly tables of the heart." Thus it is that love and beauty (not in their romantic sense) are inseparably associated in certain forms of our existence.

But it is not alone in the exercise of the higher and deeper affections of humanity that we are to seek for the beautiful. The material world that surrounds us overflows with it. Take, for instance, the early dawn of a summer's day, that period of the morning which precedes the outbursting of the splendors of the sun; or select, if you please, the hour of "dewy eve," when that same luminary has "bathed his burning axle" in the deep waters of the Pacific. Could mortal pencil ever approach the execution of such panoramic scenes of beauty? All, all is original. All else is copy. Every where the difference between the finite and the infinite meets the mind of man. Now, the simple purpose of lighting the world might have been accomplished without so lavish a display of—I had almost said—kaleidoscopic beauty. But God delights in benevolence, as well as in beauty, physical, intellectual, and spiritual. Hence, the union of beauty and goodness, in so many of his individual acts and fixed constitutions.

Now, to appreciate duly this combination, as well as to enjoy fully the natural scenes which are evidential of it, a man must be in a *healthy* state. If disease is wearing out his system, he will have little relish for such objects. They are but mockery to a dying man,

unless, indeed, the religious principle is triumphant within him. If he be a man of diseased principles and profligate practices; if there be not a healthy tone of the moral system, he is not the man to look on the displays of goodness and beauty. A drunkard, a gambler, or a sluggard of any kind, will not rise to behold the dawning glories of the East; and, if he did, would not enjoy them. That deprivation is one of the penalties annexed to his transgressions.

So, for aught we perceive, all the purposes of a flower might have been answered without investing it with such varied and exquisite beauty, and equally without adding to it that delightfully mysterious fragrance, so exciting to the appropriate organs, and often awakening, particularly in the female bosom, emotions of the highest enthusiasm. Is it because of her superior purity? Or is there among the inward and invisible elements of that soul a gentleness, a beauty, a hidden fragrance, that corresponds, and, so to speak, *congenializes* with the outward works of God? I have sometimes stood and admired the passionate fondness of a child for flowers. The rapture of that little girl, in her young and guileless being, was perfectly contagious, and I found my own heart dancing with a sympathetic joy. I was sure that in her all was natural. An experienced beauty might mingle some airs of affectation with her soft eulogies on the most beautiful portion of the vegetable creation, as there are those in fashionable life who would not on any account be thought destitute of a taste for the Fine Arts, and so purchase and admire pictures and statuary, without really possessing any judgment, if they have any pleasure in such matters.

But a child revels with unsophisticated emotions in this enchanting region of Nature's great empire; worships with a pure and burning devotion, in this part of her holy temple. Yet it cannot be proved that such sources of pleasure are essential to the existence and the progress of childhood. But they are essential to the more perfect development of the benevolence of God, delighting as it does to associate itself with the forms of natural beauty in order to promote and exalt the happiness even of a child.

Nor should any one presume to interfere with that felicity. A crusty old bachelor, or a childless husband (a far superior character), might be disgusted with an enthusiasm for which he had no sympathy, but let him take care how he offends one of these little ones. There are guardian spirits ministering to them, invisible, but real; if doubted by men, yet accredited in the court of heaven, and acting under the highest regal authority. "In heaven they do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven," said He, whose humanity, shrining the Divinity, was upheld and sanctified by that sublime and mysterious connection, while it graced the ungrateful world that scorned and crucified him. He, in the days of his flesh, stooped with a profound and graceful tenderness to the little ones, and mingled his own crystal sympathies with the spirit of childhood. He rebuked the temper that would repel them from the charities of Christianity. He spoke words for them that will never be forgotten through all the lapse of time.

Nor was the illustrious teacher of men indifferent to the voices of nature around him. The quiet beauty of

the lily charmed that imagination, which ever maintained a perfectly harmonious relation to the other powers of the mind, was never deceived by the ever-shifting illusions that are accustomed to play around it, and never exaggerated the pictures it drew of the character, the state, or destiny of man. All earthly glory was less captivating to that rightly constituted imagination, than the lovely, spotless hue of the flower of the field. And yet this is surpassed by the beauty of virtue—of the graces of the spirit.

“Is aught so fair
In all the dewy landscape of the spring.
In the bright eye of Hesper, or the morn;
In Nature’s fairest forms, is aught so fair,
As virtuous friendship?”

The features of the external world, whatever permanence they seem to have, are all to be erased, all to be extinguished, in the final “wreck” of matter and crush of worlds. But moral qualities are in their nature sempiternal. Moral and spiritual beauty is imperishable! This is goodness—this is holiness—the crown and the gem of the Divinity itself. Was ever a more impressive prayer offered than that of the exquisite poet, as well as the splendid monarch of Israel: “The BEAUTY of the Lord our God be upon us!” That would be beauty worthy of the muse of the immortal Milton, or the burning pencil of the seraphic Isaiah.

We may now take what writers on the Philosophy of the Moral Feelings have, by a metaphorical license, called the *beauty of sound*. It involves the power of music in all its variations and capabilities of impres-

sion ; whether that music emanate from living mind or inanimate matter. Besides its original and essential quality of producing emotion by the power of association, it wonderfully augments the effect on the susceptibilities of the interior man. There is a soft and sweet tone of music in the flow of a rivulet, amid rural scenery, beneath the sunlight of a bright summer's day ; but how are our emotions deepened and strengthened, when, at the hour of midnight, we hear that same stream, after having enlarged its channel and accelerated its momentum, plunging over a precipice, or an artificial embankment ; acquiring at this point the character of a *waterfall*, one of the most interesting objects in nature ! A feeling of sublimity is now added to the state of the mind, and the emotion becomes complete. The elements of darkness, obscurity, and silence are introduced, and seem nearly to absorb the sense of beauty. The soul almost instinctively raises itself to God, "who maketh darkness his pavilion, and the thick darkness his swaddling band." That sound seems the organ-dirge of Nature, over the temporary death of the inanimate world. Less sad and solemn, but still tenderly pensive, are the notes of the night-bird, familiar to New England ears, heard in the gray twilight of summer, as he now ascends, greeting the lofty regions of the air with his monotone—a not very melodious soprano ; and then plunges into the depths of ether below, uttering, at the last point of his descent, a deep bass note ; then rising again to renew his music "at the gate of heaven."

But, oh ! how blithe and merry is the song of birds in the bright and early morning ! Poetry has conse-

erated all this natural music, which, in its nature, is fitted to lead up the soul to God. It is part of the worship of this magnificent temple, whose arch is the blue vault of heaven, whose pavement is the green earth, whose worshipers are MEN, "made in the image of God;" and whose presiding, all-pervading divinity is God himself—the Eternal, the Immortal, the Invisible, the OMNIPRESENT.

This train of thought might be pursued, but will—at least for the present—be suspended. If any mind shall, by it, be led to a deeper contemplation of the connected influence of Beauty and Benevolence, my object will be attained.



XXV.

The Influence of the Fine Arts on the Moral Sensibilities.

IN constructing the being called man, and in providing for his felicity, it has pleased the Creator to prepare two distinct, general sources from which that felicity is derived.

The first exists within the breast of man himself; the other is found in the vast variety of the external world. Nor are these sources of pleasurable emotion altogether independent of each other. On the contrary, there is between them a correspondence so wise and perfect, as to show a manifest design by their combined energy to make men happy.

To illustrate my meaning: The soul of man is endowed with a faculty to which we give the name of *taste*. By the rhetorician, taste is defined to be "the power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and art." Whenever, therefore, this power is exercised on its appropriate object, the result is *mental felicity*. One mind is so constituted that it derives its greatest pleasure from the study of poetry; another from the deductions and demonstrations of mathematical science. So absorbed, indeed, have some minds been in their admiration of the exact sciences, that scarcely any thing, within the empire of thought, could give them pleasure but the strictest demonstration. Hence, a celebrated mathematician is said to have exclaimed, after having toiled through *Paradise Lost*, "What does it all *prove*?" On the other hand, when the Pythagorean proposition in Euclid was discovered by its author, he ran through the streets of his city in an ecstasy of delight, crying, "*I have found it, I have found it.*"

To others, again, the productions of the *pencil* or *chisel* convey a paramount pleasure, while they awaken within the soul deep and inexpressible emotions. The organ of communication in these cases is the eye, through which, also, the soul admires the beauty of *architectural* creations and proportions. But the art of music, "the concord of sweet sounds," demands another organ, which we call the ear, through which it pours its raptures into the same soul. Hence the blind, whose visual organ cannot perceive the external beauties either of nature or of art, and to whom, therefore, all these sources of pleasure are sealed, turn with redoubled relish to those objects which communicate with the soul through the

organ of the ear. And it is highly probable that this *compensation* is so complete in its nature and so beneficent in its influence, as entirely to supply a deficiency which is commonly considered an irretrievable calamity.

The highest order of influence is that produced by ELOQUENCE, which seems to combine the excellences of the arts already mentioned. Thus eloquence involves the very soul of poetry, as is evident from the breathing thoughts and burning words of the ancient bards and prophets, who swayed the minds of their countrymen with a power never surpassed in the age of the most accomplished orators. *Poet* and *prophet* were in fact interchangeable terms among the ancients, and these men were the accredited public speakers of their assemblies. At the feasts and games they rehearsed their own productions to their delighted fellow-citizens, and when occasion required, stimulated them with all the energy of song to deeds of martial valor. The epic poem existed prior to the oration. Homer, the prince of poets, lived some hundreds of years before Pericles, the father of oratory. Moses, the occasional poet, as well as the commissioned lawgiver of the Hebrews, composed heroic, or triumphal songs, in his native language at the very time (1490 B. C.) Cadmus was introducing the alphabet into Greece, or six centuries before the poems of Homer were known in Greece. Very justly, therefore, does Campbell, the author of the *Pleasures of Hope*, in his *Lectures on Poetry*, observe: "The earliest place in the history of poetry is thus due to the Hebrew muse. * * Indeed, the more we contemplate the Old Testament, the more we shall be struck by the solitary grandeur in which it

stands as an historical monument amid the waste of time." It is from these ancient treasures, sacred and secular, that the materials of the most sublime and effective eloquence have been drawn. So completely is the spirit of poetry and of eloquence intermingled in the compositions of the Hebrew prophets, that the critics are undecided whether to class them as orators or poets.

In comparing the art of eloquence with the art of *painting*, it may be observed, that aside from those qualities which are peculiar to the former, it is itself a kind of moral painting, which, disdaining the mere locality of the canvas, instantly wings its flight through every region of nature and of art, summoning at pleasure whatever it needs to produce an impression on the soul. And that impression is not, as in a picture, the result of slow and labored strokes of the pencil, but of the mighty action of mind in its boldest conceptions and its warmest enthusiasm. The calm contemplation of a mere copy, however beautiful—of a moveless scene, however brilliant, cannot, in the nature of things, so rouse the sleeping emotions of the soul, as the living, intelligent, and embodied genius of human eloquence, carrying the soul captive by its moral power, and encircling the whole man with its irresistible enchantments. All painting must necessarily be descriptive. Even that which is imaginative seeks original forms out of which to construct its combinations. But description is only one attribute of eloquence. Direct persuasion is its great object. It is, indeed, defined to be "the art of persuasion." But, though *indirect* persuasion may be predicated of some of the productions of the pencil, it

is only an incidental result, not a part of the main design. For instance, the object of those historical paintings which adorn the National Rotunda, is national glory. But incidentally they are adapted to *persuade* the rising youth of our country to the adoption of principles of pure patriotism, and to the performance of deeds of heroic devotion. The object of that splendid specimen of sculptured marble, which may be seen in the eastern park, is to honor him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." Nor can a thoughtful American youth contemplate it without some stirring emotions; without some nascent purpose of soul, like this illustrious prototype, to deserve well of his country in whatever sphere he may be placed. If such, then, be the effect of these speechless works of art upon the patriotic heart; if even the mute painting and the voiceless marble can be so eloquent; if they can illustrate the renown of past generations, and inspire generations to come with the spirit of high endeavor, to what achievements may not a living, speaking eloquence aspire? The statue of Demosthenes might charm the beholder, but what would he think of Demosthenes himself, especially could he hear the indignant tones of his voice denouncing the atrocities of the King of Macedon?

When the comparison is instituted between eloquence and music, the result to which we come is more doubtful, supposing the standard by which we measure that result to be the beautiful rather than the useful. The emotions awakened in the human soul by strains of soft or sublime music, cannot be surpassed in depth and power by any feeling of which the soul is capable when

under the influence of any of the fine arts. It is an influence which reaches its finest chords and awakens its most exquisite sensibilities. The fable of Orpheus calling from the dead his beloved Eurydice by the resistless power of music, however destitute of literal truth, furnishes a striking tribute from antiquity to the charms of music. It is, in truth, one of those arts which is founded in nature, if, indeed, it does not boast a higher birth—in heaven itself. There was melody in the groves of Eden while the world was yet in its infancy, and man in his purity. Thus Milton represents our first parent in his apostrophe to the glorious works of God as saying :

“Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling, tune his praise
Join voices, all ye living souls: ye birds,
That singing up to heaven's gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Witness, if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill or valley, fountain or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.”

If man could not be silent in the midst of the works of God, much less could those pure spirits, who dwelt more immediately in the presence of the Great King, and beheld his glory unobstructed by a veil of flesh. Hence we are informed, that the “morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” This art, then, is of noble birth, and, like the sister arts, should never be desecrated to unworthy and unhallowed purposes. The sanctity of their origin should be their safeguard against perversion. Music may be called the bride of poetry, for they were wedded

in Paradise, and have continued for the most part to live harmoniously together through all the revolutions of time, the decay of empires, and the sepulture of the human race. Nor can they ever be divorced so long as the passions of the soul shall demand expression. For every emotion of joy or grief, of love or indignation, there is an appropriate sign, which takes the form of a modulated sound, and these sounds, in the process of the application of art to nature, are so arranged and proportioned as to produce the most powerful impressions on the mind through the ear. Even instrumental music can be traced as far back as any art whatever, not connected with the pressing necessities of life. Ancient history informs us that the "first poets sang their own verses, and hence the beginning of what we call *versification*, or words arranged in a more artful order than prose, so as to be suited to some tune or melody." The scale or alphabet of music is more wonderful than even the alphabet of language; for while the latter consists of arbitrary signs, the former is an immutable production of Nature. Music, then, was made for the heart of man, and although we cannot say with Shakespeare, that he who has no soul for it is "fit for treason, stratagem, and spoils;" though this great master of nature, in inditing so bitter and sweeping a censure, overstepped the limits of truth and probability, yet we may well wonder at the man whose sensibilities are never moved under so charming an influence. Eloquence claims to include this art within its ample domain, so far as the energy of emphasis, the melody of sound, and the harmony of periods are concerned. That wonderful instrument, the living voice, is essential to the high-

est achievements of both. Conception, adaptation, accent, emphasis and expression, all are common to both. Inspiration once said to one of the eloquent prophets who had addressed the people: "*Thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but do them not.*" The superiority of eloquence as a practical and manly art is seen at the bar, in the forum, in the legislative assembly; those great theaters for the transaction of civil affairs, where music would be a strange and unwelcome guest, as bringing nothing useful with her, but being rather a hindrance and detriment to the commonwealth.

The science of ARCHITECTURE, which is of later origin than most of the arts already mentioned, as being a production of civilized life, does, nevertheless, like other arts of design, come down to us from classical antiquity. The history of the arts has been classified into four luminous periods. The first is the era of Alexander, Pericles, Aristotle, Apelles, Phidias, when, in a rough and martial age, eloquence, philosophy, painting, sculpture, and architecture each found a genius which each could immortalize. The second era is that of the Cæsars, when poetry and history rose to the very point of culmination. This period embraces the Augustan age. The third is that which followed the capture of Constantinople by the successor of Mohammed, Mohammed II. Italy became now the refuge of the fine arts, and under the fostering care of the Medici, whatever was rescued from the barbarity of the Turks and the Goths was advanced to a degree of eminent perfection. It was the golden age of painting and sculpture, as the

brilliant names of Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, and Corregio testify, while the beauties of architecture were reproduced in that land of classic models under the genius of Palladio,

“ Who bade the lofty column rise,
Its summit pointing to the skies.”

The last age is that succeeding the Reformation, when, along with the invention of the art of printing and the mariner's compass, the mind of man shook off its slumbers, and, stimulated by the discoveries of the past and the expectations of the future, commenced a new career of improvement. The discovery of a new world occurring at this period, in the order of an infinitely wise Providence, gave an impulse to the mind of the old world which nothing could resist. Experimental philosophy burst forth upon the intellect of civilized nations with the power of intuitive demonstration, and reason and revelation were enthroned amid the ruins of scholastic absurdities. Men were eloquent, because every faculty of the mind was awakened to extraordinary activity. The brightest period of British eloquence, embracing the names of Chatham, Burke, Pitt, and Fox, which has just past, belongs to this epoch. Indeed, not only have the fine arts been most successfully cultivated during the last three hundred years, but never, in the history of the human mind, has genuine science made such sensible and important progress. And as all art is founded in science, the advancement of the one insures the improvement of the other.

In analyzing more particularly the influence of these arts on the sensibilities of man, let us recur to the most

ancient among them—poetry. This is not merely the language of the imagination, as it has sometimes been defined. It often lies deep in the heart of the poet himself, and then it is that it awakens the most profound emotion in the hearts of others. To illustrate this: Let any one compare the poetry of Akenside with that of Burns; while the former glows with animated beauty, occasionally rising to a stirring eloquence, the latter seizes the fibers of the heart, perhaps in a single line, and they tremble with emotion. The genius of Akenside may dazzle the imagination by its coruscations, but that of Burns electrifies the heart. The one may be compared to an artificial fountain throwing up by hydrostatic pressure its beautiful jets; the other to a natural fountain in the hill-side, gushing out with translucent purity from its secret recesses. The former might well sing of the Pleasures of the Imagination, for he was the poet of the imagination; the latter of the simplicities and sanctities of HOME, for he is the poet of the heart, and thither the heart turns amid all its wanderings and its wounds. There it would rest at last. “Bet me die among my kindred,” exclaims the Orientalist. Home!

“How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to thee!”

It is for this reason that Cowper, whose muse is so conversant with the “business and bosoms” of men, has secured so triumphant a place in the affections of all the lovers of true poetry; while Pope, however brilliant in poetic conception, and perfect in the harmony of

numbers, must consent to enjoy his regal dignity, an object of admiration rather than of affection in his exalted sphere. Burns said that the muse of his country found him as Elijah did Elisha, *at the plow*, and threw her mantle of inspiration over him. If, obedient to the mandate of his mistress, the poet abandoned the plow for an elevated field of fame, the freshness and the fragrance of his rural associations still clung around him, and he delighted to write poetry to the mountain-daisy, which he had upturned with the plowshare; that "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower," as he calls it, whose fate he seemed to consider emblematic of his own:

"There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snowy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lift'st thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the *share* upturns thy bed,
And low thou lies!

*Such is the fate of simple bard
On life's rough ocean luckless starved."*

But he learned many a useful lesson at the domestic fireside and altar, which, had he remembered and practiced, would have saved him that agony of feeling, he himself describes in those fine verses entitled, "*Man was made to mourn.*"

"Many and sharp the numerous ills
Inwoven with our frame;
More pointed still we make ourselves
Regret, remorse, and shame."

From the poisoned cup of self-indulgence he drank pain and sorrow till the agony of his soul became chronic,

and the dignity of genius bowed beneath the sway of a base and despotic passion. The stream of poetic feeling was tainted too early and deeply in his young manhood to admit of clarification, and by his own confession, there was more than one line written which, "dying, he would wish to blot." When, however, he burst away from the spell of temptation, abandoned for a season his boon companions, and exchanged the roar of the bar-room for the tranquil seclusion of home and homeborn associations, then his genius, plucking away every foul adhesion, and pluming its wings for a serener flight, would achieve something worthy of his own spreading fame, and of the deeply religious feeling of his beloved country. Thus, in that most celebrated of his productions, the "Cotter's Saturday Night," which, in fact, is a painting of a family scene—his own father's home being the original, he proceeds in this strain.

'Oh Scotia! my dear, my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil

Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And oh, may heaven their simple lives prevent

From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,

A *virtuous* *populace* may rise the while

And stand, a wall of fire, around their much-loved isle."

Here are patriotic sentiments strongly ingrafted on domestic sympathies, and the heart of Scotland leaps for joy at the sound of this music. Crowns and coronets may glitter with hereditary lustre, but here is a patent of nobility from the Author of mind—a diadem of beauty, the lustre of which does not fade. This do-

minion of genius is most truly imperial, because of its essential strength, and that strength arises from the influence which falls upon the heart.

If now we contemplate the sister arts in the same relation, we shall be struck with similar results. Although the field of the painter is comparatively limited, yet in that field the triumph of the art has been wonderful. If it be one of the attributes of genius to diffuse its energies far and wide, it is a not less important attribute to concentrate its powers within a small compass, and to execute so condensed a view of a great moral subject, as to produce a proportionate impression on the susceptibilities of the soul.

It is here that the power of the pictorial art is confessedly pre-eminent. The poet, availing himself of the succession of time and place, can select and combine from all the circumstances of the past, and thus at will pass through the present to the future, and, if necessary, even retrace the glowing path of his imagination. But the painter, compelled to seize one moment of time and one local position, summons all his powers to the mighty effort, and bestows on that point the whole strength of his genius. He may have studied for years a design which is to occupy but a few square feet of canvas. But he paints for immortality, and deep must be the studies, patient the toil, exhaustless the perseverance of such a mind. He aims not merely to please the eye. That could be done by the simple process of fine coloring. He seeks to stir the deep sea of human sensibility. He desires to reach the most retired and secret fountains of feeling in man, and hence he must commune for days and nights with nature herself in her multiplied

forms and in her beautiful developments. Some minds are more affected by *natural scenery* than by any other source of moral influence. To such the rich landscapes of Titian would convey a most refined and delicate pleasure. For besides the impression produced by a view of the charms of nature, there would be the emotion of admiration for the triumph of genius in transferring, as by some magical art, the features of still life to the canvas. It is thus that a combination of moral causes has a tendency to increase the power of intellectual enjoyment. What, then, must have been the pleasures of Michael Angelo, who was not only the first of painters, but eminent also as a sculptor and an architect, and even as a poet, distinguished by the power of his imagination! Who can measure the power of such a mind to impart and receive pleasure? When the eminent painters of modern times would display the highest perfection of the art, they seem by the very instinct of genius to select the most elevated and impressive subjects, and these subjects they could find nowhere but in the Scriptures of Divine Inspiration. The same is true of the great masters of music, who have delighted the world with their productions. Haydn sought the idea of his Creation, Handel of his Messiah, Beethoven of his Mount of Olives, in the sources of holy inspiration. Of the vast influence of their works upon the mind of the world, it is unnecessary to speak. It was under the promptings of a similar spirit that Milton, that great *moral* painter, that architect of the most sublime poem in existence, invoked the aid of the Spirit of God at the very threshold of his immortal work, and, intending "no middle flight," sought to imbibe his inspiration at "Si-

loa's brook, that flowed fast by the oracle of God." It must hence result, that the more widely Christianity extends her empire in the earth, shaping the purposes and sanctifying the sensibilities of men, the more certainly will their taste seek its gratification in such works rather than in those which abound in the machinery of gods and demons, or of elves, witches, and fairies; and especially rather than in those which pander to the passions, debauch the imagination, and corrupt the heart.

The names of Raphael, Rubens, Van Dyke, Paul Veronese, Salvator Rosa, Leonardo da Vinci, are familiar in the history of painting. If you inquire which are the most successful and the most celebrated of their productions; what subjects did they choose on which to spend the force of their genius, the reply is, **THE THEMES OF INSPIRATION**: the preaching of Paul at Athens; the Death of John the Baptist; the Judgment of Solomon; Saul at the Tomb of Samuel; the Miracles of Christ; the Transfiguration; the Crucifixion; the Resurrection; the Descent from the Cross; the Last Supper; the Last Judgment. Were these men attracted solely by the moral beauty and the essential grandeur of their themes, or did they not also, with a kind of prophetic vision, anticipate the day when, in consequence of the supremacy of Christianity over the mind of posterity, their own bright and sublime creations would so harmonize with the spirit of that illustrious age, as to secure to their fame an amaranthine freshness to the end of time? Did they not, in addressing their works of art to the religious sensibilities of man, expect to find in them responses of the deepest tone and of the

most undoubted perpetuity? Now, though the colors should fade from their canvas, other master-spirits will arise, to imitate their example, perhaps to surpass their achievements; and while they reform that which is vicious in point of morals, will add purity to the profession, grace to the art, and grandeur to its results. The Roman and Grecian, the Florentine and Venetian schools, will then have passed away, to be succeeded by that last and noblest, the CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

In adverting to the influence of architecture on the mind, three things are to be considered: comprehensiveness of design, beauty of proportion, and sublimity of expression. These qualities are essential to the highest success of the art. When combined, they excite some of the strongest sentiments of the mind; and especially when viewed in connection with antiquity, though in broken forms, they become invested with so many interesting associations, and awaken so many powerful recollections, as at times almost to overwhelm the mind. Thus the Temple of Theseus at Athens, so remarkably preserved, though built ten years after the battle of Marathon, presents not merely a specimen of the material sublime, but connects itself with the history of that wonderful people, who reared its magnificent columns, which have weathered the storms of two thousand years. It is thus that architecture, amid the ruins of time, furnishes here and there a sublime and comprehensive symbol of the history of the past; and the grandeur of the human intellect transmits its own imperishable evidence to the latest posterity. Poetry has not withheld its tribute from the sister art. The author of the "Seasons," not insensible to any of the

forms of beauty, whether in the visible world or in the empire of the imagination, thus speaks :

“ First, unadorned
And nobly plain, the manly Doric rose ;
The Ionic then, with decent matron grace,
Her airy pillar heaved ; luxuriant last
The rich Corinthian spread her leafy wreath.”

Any form of art that could thus be described must be emblematic, and emblems most strongly affect the imagination. Here, then, is another source of sentiment in the department of architectural design.

But the assigned limits of this paper do not permit me to pursue this train of thought. In reviewing those arts at which we have glanced on the present occasion, we see prepared on the one hand the beautiful images of poetry—the rich colors of painting—the moral sublimities of eloquence—the soft melody of music—the silent eloquence of sculpture—the impressive designs of architecture ; and on the other, certain mental susceptibilities, by which the influence emanating from these arts is enjoyed. There are faculties in men, each one of which meets some creation of immortal genius by a law as certain as that which adapts light to the eye or sound to the ear. Why, then, should the human intellect ever slumber, or why should the mind ever be at a loss for sources of rational pleasure ? What expectations may not be indulged with reference to the future !

OUR COUNTRY is young in years, but where is there such a land to excite human intellect ? Her reminiscences are indeed brief, but brilliant. Her promise is great and animating. Look at her giant mountains—

her broad rivers that rush sublimely to the ocean—her beautiful lakes, each one a mimic sea—her deep, untrodden forests, so luxuriantly vast, so wildly grand—her wide-spread scenery, varied with every tint of beauty that ever fell from Nature's pencil—how much is here to awaken the genius of poetry and of painting! Contemplate her institutions—their origin with the people—conquered by the people in a conflict, a parallel to which history does not furnish—secured by a power that resides within themselves—chartered by their own authority—the very nature of the American government demands the utmost freedom of thought and latitude of discussion on all subjects, and this is the condition of the highest eloquence. With the advancing refinement of society all the sister arts will advance, each occupying its appropriate niche in the great temple of science, and all combining to instruct the mind and soften the manners of a stern and enterprising people. Go on, then, my beloved country, encourage every rising genius. Multiply your institutes of science and your halls of literature. Let there be an alliance of nations to foster the arts and to forget arms. Let the sword of war continue to sleep in its scabbard, and the trump of battle no more rouse the wrath of contending hosts, nor the tramp of hostile squadrons shake the ensanguined plain; but may the general strife be, who shall most successfully cultivate the arts of peace, and promote the happiness of universal man!

XXVI.

The Six Johns.

JOHN WICKLIFF—JOHN HUSS—JOHN KNOX—JOHN CALVIN—
JOHN BUNYAN—JOHN WESLEY.

HERE is a constellation of brilliant names. Each one suggests a lofty train of thought. Uninspired they were, but not uncommissioned of Heaven, not undirected of the Spirit of God. The first has been called the morning star of the Reformation. He was not the Great Light itself, but he came to bear a kind of prophetic witness to it. Richmond in Yorkshire gave him birth, Oxford an education, Heaven a heart to love all men here, and a final home among the saints. His lot was cast in the fourteenth century. In that dark day he struck out some light, and flashed it in the face of the Pope. He boldly approached the triple crown to negotiate for the liberties of the Church of England. His object was obtained. But this was only a beginning. The more he contemplated the system of popery—that vast “chamber of imagery”—the more he saw, like Ezekiel, greater and greater abomination, and the indignant spirit of the Christian Reformer could not be restrained. He thought, he reasoned, he prayed, he wrote, he spoke, for the word of God—the living truth was “as a fire shut up in his bones.” The mystery of iniquity rose before him in all its hideous dimensions, and his was the honor to give the first stroke to the

alarm-bell, that eventually aroused all Christendom to the dangers over which it had so long slumbered. He set the trumpet of the Gospel to his lips, and the sound thereof rang over the Seven Hills, if not with the emphatic tones of Luther, yet with a strange and startling clearness that disturbed the guilty dreams of the reigning Pontiff—that monarch of darkness—that despot of souls.

Five papal bulls were fulminated at the daring rebel, and all the powers of England, civil, regal, and ecclesiastical, were imperatively invoked to crush the heretic.

Wickliff was summoned before the Bishop of London. An immense crowd rushed to the scene. All was excitement. Friends and enemies were confronted in fierce array. High words ensued. Truth and Error met, and clashed swords. The tumult increased, the tribunal broke up, and Wickliff escaped.

Again was he cited before the papal delegates at Lambeth Palace, and again did God raise up friends, who stood by him to shield him from the wrath of his enemies.

At Oxford he was seized with a dangerous illness. The mendicant Friars beset his bed, adjuring him to renounce his errors and impieties. Directing his attendants to raise and support his head on his pillow, he said, in a loud and determined voice: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the evil deeds of the Friars!" Such strength does Christ give to his heroic servants in the hour of their need, and of his glory. That sickness was not unto death. The mendicants cowered before the majesty of his rebuke, and fled his presence. He

lived to execute a *translation of the Scriptures*—the first translation into the immortal English language; an era, not alone in a man's life, but in the history of man, for it involved a principle as enduring as the Protestant faith.

Fresh conspiracies were formed against him, but the vigilant providence of God defeated them, and at length he departed this life at Lutterworth, where he had taught men both through the pen and the pulpit, in December, 1384. There he was buried, but the grave, usually regarded by men as the inviolable sanctuary of all, was no shelter to the hated dust of Wickliff! Forty years had not cooled the malice of his enemies, who, so long after his death, disinterred his bones, burned them to ashes, and cast the ashes into the nearest river. Glorious incineration! The enemies of Christ can martyr the bodies of his saints, but the martyrdom of the soul is beyond their power. The very act by which they sought to imprint infamy on the name of John Wickliff, gave to that name the finishing stroke of its immortality. A thousand mausoleums of Parian marble would not so have honored him. Such are the rewards of heroic virtue, consecrated to the glory of God and the good of men. "The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot." They could not quench the mild light of that "morning star," while their own sickly and lurid beam went out in everlasting darkness!

Poetry has spoken of the voices of the dead—of the silent ministration of departed spirits. It is not a mere fiction of the imagination. It is founded in truth. It is truth—even sanctioned by inspiration itself; for, of

the first noble martyr to the fury of persecution, the sacred oracles have recorded the sublime testimony, that "being dead, he yet speaketh." And so of this first John of the Reformation. The lapse of years adds honor to his name—fragrance to his memory. Time only deepens the gratitude of posterity to such benefactors of the world.

THE SECOND JOHN—HUSS.

If John Wickliff was the proto-reformer, John Huss was the proto-martyr of the Reformation, the seeds of which were vital and vegetative, even in those days of darkness and despotism. Some rays of light were transmitted by means of Wickliff across the waters from England to Bohemia, which, mingling with other rays that shot forth from the romantic and secluded valleys of Piedmont, enlightened and stimulated the mental vision of such men as John Huss and Jerome of Prague. Wickliff's books were so dangerous to the cause of popery, that the Archbishop of Prague ordered two hundred volumes of them to be burned! What a pity that such men could not burn the truth itself! But no, you cannot consume fire with fire—at least, not the fire of the sun with the flames of persecution.

A young student at Oxford, being impregnated with the doctrines and spirit of Wickliff, conveyed them to Prague, where they set on fire the soul of John Huss. Like a colporteur, he carried thither some of the tracts of the Morning Star, and Huss read them with a deep and eager enthusiasm. So enraptured was he with the discoveries thus made, so enamored of the beauty and sublimity of the truths, that he declared Wickliff to be

“an angel sent from heaven to enlighten mankind, and that his writings had furnished him with the richest pleasure in the world, and that it would be his joy to live in heaven with that excellent man.” Such is the power of truth, so penetrating and inspiring is its influence. John Huss was awaking like a giant from his slumbers. He was ready to shout with his new inspiration. This was no fanaticism. It was the first animating impulse of the Gospel, which is “mighty through God.”

Forthwith he plunged into the depths of the Gospel mine, and grappled with those treasures, “the merchandise of which is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.” He became suddenly rich with that wealth, and he was as generous as rich. While the treasure was in an earthen vessel, the excellency of the power was of God. He became a potent and popular preacher.

Nor was the purity of his life less exemplary than the quality of his public performances. He vindicated the rights of the people to read the Scriptures. This was sufficient to rouse the stupid indignation of a Romish ecclesiastic. The Archbishop, who could not himself read, in consequence of which he received the *sobriquet* of Alphabetarius, or the A B C Doctor, of course prohibited all such profane familiarity with the Scriptures as was implied in learning to read them. But why attempt to chain the light, or bid the winds of heaven cease to blow? They ask no passport with which to travel up and down the earth. Nor does Truth. Though “crushed to earth,” it will “rise again” with renewed strength, desiring a “free encounter.”

Pope John ordered Cardinal Colonna to cite Huss before him at Rome, but he declined obedience, and was excommunicated. He appealed to a Council, and being driven from his church, retired to his native village of Hussemitz, to preach and to write without fear, if not without reproach. He, too, was a writer of tracts, the best "tracts for the times" that appeared.

The next assault upon the humble but intrepid John was a summons to appear before the Council of Constance, which convened in November, 1414. Its object was to settle a quarrel between three rival claimants to the throne of the Seven Hills. The tiara might be said to be torn in pieces in the furious struggles of the different factions to grasp it for their leaders. Religion shrieked in terror under the violence of her professed followers. Charity wept her strength away in view of the triumphs of sanctified guilt.

Of this Council of Constance, Fox says: "There were archbishops and bishops, 346; abbots and doctors, 564; princes, dukes, earls, knights, and squires, 16,000; prostitutes, 450; barbers, 600; musicians, cooks, and jesters, 320." A goodly assemblage, indeed, and quite congenial with the spirit and temper of the age. The period was rampant with popery, and redolent of the influence of the pit.

It was a period of jubilee among devils, and of mourning among the angels. The saints were in sack-cloth, and sinners in cloth of gold and all soft raiment. At such a time did Pope John bring Huss before this profligate Council, the Emperor Sigismund pledging him a safe-conduct. This pledge was utterly disregarded, on the principle that "no faith is to be kept

with heretics." He was seized and imprisoned. On being brought before the Council a second time, and required to abjure, he firmly refused, preferring the alternative of death. On being condemned, he manifested the most profound resignation, kneeled down, raised his eyes to heaven, and prayed for his murderers! When stripped of his priestly garments, degraded from his sacred functions and University degrees, and crowned in mockery, with a paper miter, on which images of devils were painted, with this inscription in capitals, "*A ringleader of heretics*,"—he smiled and said, "*It is less painful than a crown of thorns.*"

From the decision of this Pandemonium he appealed to the Court of Heaven. At the place of execution, he kneeled, sang, and prayed, embracing the stake and the chain, and saying, "My Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain for my sake, and why should I be ashamed of this old, rusty one? What I taught with my lips, I now seal with my blood." How far superior is such moral courage to the headlong valor of the bloody battle-field! Amid the crackling of the fagots were heard the triumphant notes of the martyr hymn that rose to heaven from the lips of John Huss, while, like his prototype Stephen, he breathed out his soul to God in these words: "Into thy hands, O Lord, do I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O God."

They gathered his ashes, and cast them into the waters of the Rhine, every drop of which stream, could a tongue have been given to it, would have cried to the justice of heaven to draw its avenging sword on these murderers of defenseless innocence. Their souls have

gone to the bar of God, while their memory is consigned to the execrations of the latest posterity—of all, in all time, who are not palsied with priestly oppression, besotted with papal superstition, or shriveled with ghostly bigotry.

Strong are the words of Pollok :

“The infidel who turned his impious war
Against the walls of Zion, on the rock
Of ages built, and higher than the clouds,
Sinned, and received his due reward ; but she*
Within her walls sinned more. Of Ignorance
Begot, her daughter, Persecution, walked
The earth from age, and drank the blood
Of saints ; with horrid relish drank the blood
Of God’s peculiar children, and was drunk,
And in her drunkenness dreamed of doing good !”

THE THIRD JOHN—KNOX.

A concise name, the whole of which employs but two syllables, but formidable was the sound thereof to the enemies of the truth, whether gowned, mitered, or crowned. So, too, was his a compact character. He was a hero of great thoughts and daring deeds. His parents were neither great nor rich, but thanks to the Author of the constitution of man, that want does not prevent a man from exerting a mighty and blessed influence in this world. East Lothian gave him birth in 1505, that period so fertile in great inventions, and great discoveries, and great men. The scholastic philosophy was then imposing its interminable subtleties on young minds, but Knox mastered only to be dis-

* Bigotry

gusted with it. Jerome and Augustine pleased him more, especially because the former led him to the Hebrew fountains, while in the writings of the latter he discovered doctrines quite opposite to those of the Romish Church, who, while she retained his name as a saint in her calendar, banished his doctrine from her creed. The Spirit of God, not the mother of abominations, taught him. Gradually he disengaged himself from the shackles of that ponderous superstition. Seven years was he in emerging into the clear Protestant light. In 1542 his emancipation was complete. It was the signal for the demon of persecution to draw her sanguinary sword. But the Head of the Church enabled him to escape its edge. All the efforts of Cardinal Beaton to effect his assassination were frustrated by an ever-vigilant Providence. Sheltered from his enemies in the Castle of St. Andrews, he improved his time in educating young minds in the truth and for the service of God.

The people, captivated with his abilities and his "aptness to teach," besought him to enter the ministry, but he shrank from what he deemed an intrusion upon such high responsibilities, and declined all their solicitations. But the pastor John Rough, who perceived his gifts, was determined not so easily to let him off. This rough-and-ready servant of the Lord, having preached a sermon on the call to the pastoral office, turned to John Knox, who was present, and demanded of him in the name of God and his Son Jesus Christ, and of the whole congregation, "not to refuse the holy vocation, as he would avoid God's heavy displeasure." The whole congregation echoed the summons, and the astonished ob-

ject of it, after an ineffectual attempt to address them, burst into tears, left the assembly, and retired to solitude and to prayer. In shutting himself up in his chamber, he felt that he was shut up to that great work, from which he could be released only by death. His decision was taken. Forthwith he began to preach, and boldly struck at once at the very root of the system of popery, openly announcing the Pope to be Antichrist, and the enemy of all righteousness.

The sermon made a great noise. The wrath of Rome was roused, and among the champions who encountered him was one *Arbugkill*, a friar, who was quickly made to repent of his temerity; for however expert he might be in *killing little bugs*, he found Knox quite too big an antagonist to be safely grappled with. So retreating into the citadel of *authority* and *infallibility*, he gave up the contest.

In 1547, a French fleet and army appeared before the Castle of St. Andrews, after the manner of the military forces of the same nation in the Pacific Isles, and made prisoners of the inhabitants. Knox was conveyed, among the rest, to France, bound in chains, and kept in captivity for nineteen dreary months. Ah! they could not bind his heroic soul with fetters of iron. The lofty and unconquerable spirit of the Reformer disdained all imprisonment. Its deep and holy communion with God was beyond the reach of their violence. Prayer to God was his resort and his relief.

Liberated from durance in France, he sailed for England, where, under his preaching, many were converted from popery. Opposition arose. He was summoned before the Council, in whose presence he triumphantly

vindicated himself. Even preferment in the English Church was offered him, which he declined from a lofty obedience to the dictates of conscience. He preferred his "forty pounds a year" with a clear conscience and the liberty of Christ to all other *preferment*; blowing the trumpet of the Gospel through England until the accession of the bloody Queen Mary compelled him to retire to the Continent. He landed at Dieppe, and thence made his way to Switzerland. He was welcomed to Geneva by John Calvin, a kindred spirit. Thence he sent his "Admonition to England," an epistle burning with the vehement enthusiasm of his nature. Having revisited Scotland, and preached with his usual energy, awakening the usual opposition, he returned to Geneva, in order to accept the proffered pastorate of the English congregation in that city. There he published his "Letter to the Queen Regent," and his "First Blast of the Trumpet," no uncertain sound from his lips. After five years spent in Geneva, Knox returned to Scotland, though the minions of the Queen had sentenced him to death for heresy, and burned him in effigy at the market cross in Edinburgh. It was a critical and turbulent period. Antagonistical elements were in high effervescence. Persecution on one side was met with fiery resistance on the other, and from arguments, controversies, and appeals, men proceeded to acts of violence incredible to us who dwell in these peaceful times. To judge of such an age by the light of our own would be unjust.

From this period, it may truly be said, the history of Knox becomes the history of Scotland. His earnest spirit and pushing mind subdued all before it. He

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was endowed with qualities eminently fitted for the times. Sir Walter Scott says: "The eloquence of this extraordinary and undaunted preacher was calculated to work on the stubborn and rough men to whom it was addressed."

Not alone on such. The mind of Queen Mary was deeply agitated under the solemn denunciations, the moving appeals, the fearless eloquence of Knox. The thunders of the pulpit shook the foundations of the throne, and the voice of the Reformer was as the tones of the prophet Elijah in the ear of the guilty Queen Jezebel, whose soul was stained with the blood of the innocents. Mary feared and hated him. What an original would that have been for the stern and scornful muse of Byron! Her youth, her beauty, all suffused in tears, could not seduce, her regal dignity could not awe him into compliance with any of her ungodly behests. Nor could all her queenly, popish craft fasten on him the guilt of treason.

After great labors in preaching and settling the polity of the Reformed Church, and great dangers from her enemies, his health began to decline. He preached the installation sermon of his successor, Mr. Lawson, in the Tolbooth Church, and prayed with extraordinary fervor. Exhausted by the service, he descended from the pulpit, leaning upon his staff, and walked along the street, which was lined with his flock, who followed him to his house, whence he never emerged, except as borne in the hearse of the dead. "God knows," said he in his dying hour, "that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments." That is an honest

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hour, and he must have spoken as truly as when he said: "I protest before God and his holy angels, that I never studied to please man, never indulged my own private passions." Many striking things did he utter in his last hours. His whole testimony was intrepid, unfaltering, and complete. His *dying*, like his *living*, was strong, impressive, and giant-like. His conflicts with the adversary were terrific, but terminated in a decisive and glorious victory. He died November 21st, 1572, at the age of sixty-six. He praised God for what he called the "heavenly sound" of prayer. Near midnight he sighed deeply, and exclaiming, "*Now it is come,*" yielded his breath to God. A mighty spirit was then dismissed to its everlasting repose. Repose, indeed, it must have been to one whose life presented such a scene of trial as that of John Knox. Flying from place to place under persecution; a wandering exile from his native land; repeatedly condemned for heresy, and proclaimed an outlaw; thrice accused of high treason, and twice tried for it; a price set on his head; assassins hired to murder him, and his life actually attempted with the dagger and the pistol; the throne and the altar leagued in deadly hostility against him, yet, like Luther, he died peacefully in his bed. And when the earth closed over his dust, Morton, the regent, uttered the memorable and the merited eulogium: "THERE LIES HE WHO NEVER FEARED THE FACE OF MAN."

THE FOURTH JOHN—CALVIN.

Four years after the birth of John Knox, came John Calvin into the world. The month of July, 1509, first

shone upon the cradle of the infant Reformer. Sturdy Scotland produced the one; versatile France the other. What a treasure did God intrust to the arms of that French mother! What a spirit did he put within the breast of that father to overcome the difficulties in the way of educating his brilliant son! That youthful mind expanded with his years, and gave signs of a promise which, in the lapse of time, was abundantly fulfilled. Invested, at a suitable age, with a benefice in the Cathedral Church at Noyon, he preached frequently, but unsatisfactorily to himself. He studied the SCRIPTURES, and they condemned him. The light in which he walked was not their light. Disgusted with Romanism, he resolved to renounce it. Impressed with the purity and majesty of Christian doctrine, he abandoned his puerilities. Charmed with the spirituality of the Gospel, he embraced it with the cordiality of a young convert.

But he turned to the law, and in the law became more eminent than his teachers. After his father's death, he resumed theology at Paris, to the joy of the friends of the Reformation. At Strasburg, to which he retired, he published his Christian Institutes, a work distinguished for its perspicuity of thought and arrangement, the elegance of its latinity, and the energy of its doctrine. As a standard of theology, its fame coextends with theological mind. Visiting Italy, he was driven from that priest-ridden country by the menaces of the Inquisition. Returning to France, he was met by the ubiquitous demon of Rome, and again set his face toward Strasburg, but was arrested at Geneva by the entreaties of Farel and others, who prevailed on

him to make it his home, and the field of his labors. The boldness and severity of his denunciation of the vices of the city awakened the hostility of many, and an order of council was procured for his expulsion from among them! But God vindicated his servant, and he was afterward earnestly recalled. Happy hour for Geneva! He became her light, her guide, her glory. Not alone as a minister of Christ did he execute great things on that field of his fame. As a civilian, he occupied an eminent position, and stamped the impress of his great mind on the institutions of a city with whose immortality he has linked his own. His labors were multiform, his industry incredible.

Like Luther and Knox, he was no foe to controversy when the occasion demanded, and those were times fertile in the sources of controversy. The temper of his theological weapons was by no means tame, and the severity of his satire rather to be excused by the character of the times than imitated in these more courteous days. The resources of his mind were immense; the energy of his will bore down all opposition.

The magistrates of Geneva punished the blasphemies of Servetus with the flames, and Calvin approved the deed. It is a stain on his memory which it is impossible to obliterate, and useless to cover. Men did not then look at such things as we do. They were ready, like the gentle John in the Saviour's family, to call down fire from heaven upon those who would not receive Christ. Let us neither reproach their memory, nor imitate their example. Every age has its blots, and can see those of every other age, but not its own. Rome taught the dreadful lesson of per-

secution for opinion's sake, and it took centuries to unlearn it.

Calvin established an academy at Geneva, the fame of which spread far and wide. Berga was his learned helper. Students came from various countries to be instructed by them. Our Reformer's expositions of the Scriptures are lucid, pertinent, and pregnant. His was one of those clear, transparent, and energetic minds that illuminate whatever they touch, and impart new force to old truths. It was a classifying, systematizing mind. It dwelt not among fictions, was captivated by no transcendental vagaries, led astray by no phantom lights gendered in the bog of a depraved imagination. He beheld those imperishable words, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*," drawn by the finger of God himself in indelible characters, and the truth filled and fired his soul. He felt the spirit-stirring influence of that other truth, "*the word of God is not bound*," and taught the world on what basis the character of its freedom must rest. His "mind was to him a kingdom," and millions of freeborn minds have acknowledged its supremacy. This is the highest triumph of man, "made in the image of God." The sword can only drink the blood of its victims, whether wielded amid the fury of persecution or the terrors of war. It alters no truth, settles no principle, redeems no error. But the free, inquisitive, argumentative spirit of a great heaven-commissioned leader in the conflict of minds, the war of truth against error, is that which achieves truly noble triumphs. The gratitude of men erects memorials to such all over the world. "The Word of God is ABOVE ALL," said Luther. "Here is

my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. At Leipsic, at Augsburg, at Worms, my spirit was as FREE as the flower of the field."

So with Knox, Calvin, and all those of that illustrious time.

Calvin, too, died *strongly*. In the latter years of his life, he was subject to severe bodily infirmities, such as have chastened many a restless and irritable spirit, and imprinted deep in the soul the sense of humiliation. Pains in the head, dyspepsia in the stomach, the ague, the gout, and the stone, alternately or simultaneously, preyed on his system, and gave timely notice that the tabernacle of clay must soon be dissolved. "Weakness and pain," as Baxter said of himself, "helped him to study how to die, that set him on studying how to live, and that on studying the doctrine from which he must fetch his motives and comforts."

"How long, O Lord?" would Calvin exclaim, in the depth of his agony. The last scene was sublimely impressive. The ministers were assembled in his room to hear his dying charge, he having before addressed the Syndics in their assembly convened for the purpose. Having discharged this duty, he gave himself up to incessant prayer to God, and thus breathed out his spirit in peace and faith. His death occurred on the 25th of May, 1564, at the age of fifty-four.

"When he departed, he took a man's life along with him;" ay, many a life to which he gave vitality and power. If, as an eminent writer* has said, the Scotch national character originated chiefly in "the Presbyterian

* Carlyle.

Gospel of John Knox," adding, in his review of Scott's works, "let Walter Scott thank John Knox, for he owed him much, little as he dreamed of debt in that quarter," what shall we say of the indebtedness of nations to John Calvin, whose spirit and principles have exerted such an immense influence on the liberties of the civilized world, to say nothing of their influence on the free Church of God? His grave, it is said, cannot be found. Nor could that of Moses, the Liberator of the Church from Egyptian bondage. But God buried him, and he will find the treasure, though "no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day," but every man knoweth where the mind of such a man is. It is here with us at this moment. The world is its domain.

THE FIFTH JOHN—BUNYAN.

Here is a character. Who does not know the history of John Bunyan? More than two centuries ago (1628) was born the "Tinker of Elstowe," of poor, but honest parents. No more remarkable John than this ever appeared on earth among uninspired men. Destitute of all earthly titles, he gloried chiefly in the appellation of a son of God. Destitute of worldly wealth, he was too happy in the "true riches" of the Gospel to envy those who possessed it. Destitute of learning, he drank in the "knowledge of God," and having instructed millions, is yet to instruct millions more in the ways of God. "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." Destitute of power in the sense in which its elements are ordinarily constructed in society, he was the most power-

ful man of his age. Bereaved of his liberty, that birth-right of man, "noble and divine in his birth," for twelve long and desolate years, which he spent in Bedford Jail, he has been the means of emancipating from bondage a great multitude of minds, which no man can number. Deprived of the sympathy of the petty tyrants by whom he was surrounded, posterity is compensating him a thousand-fold with its vast affection. Condemned by judicial authority, with all the pomp and severity of that persecuting age, the sentence of his heartless, merciless judges, has long since been reversed, and the prisoner at the bar elevated in the estimation of men far above the degree of the magistrates on the bench. Firmness, conscientiousness, and benevolence were three capital features of the moral character of John Bunyan. In the exercise of the first, he resisted the most urgent temptations to step aside from the path of duty. In that of the second, he preferred tearing himself from a fond, helpless, and dependent family, and lying in a loathsome jail, to violating his conscience toward God. "The parting with my poor wife and children," he says, with affecting simplicity and inimitable pathos, "hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones—because I should often have brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially *my poor blind child*, who lay nearer to my heart than all besides. Oh! the thought of the hardships my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. Poor child! thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world.

Thou must be beaten ; must beg ; suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee !”

That was the outbreking of the deep fountain of parental feeling. Yet the pulsations of grace were stronger than the beatings of that overmastering sensibility. Bunyan was willing to leave his poor blind child in the hands of God, but not willing to deny the Lord that bought him. Oh, for the history of that child ! Did it sink under the neglect of a selfish and pitiless world, like some tender and less comely bud that is abandoned to wither and die, or was it nursed by that noble-hearted step-mother, who bore so intrepid a testimony before the iron-hearted judges that condemned her husband, and demanded his release from a cruel and unjust imprisonment ? “ My lord,” said she to Sir Matthew Hale, “ I have *four small children* that cannot help themselves, one of which is *blind*, and we have nothing to live upon but the charity of good people.” Where were the tender mercies of that much eulogized minister of the law ? The whole scene in court, in which Elizabeth Bunyan is the chief object of attention, was of surpassing interest. A Lady Russell or a Jeanie Deans could not have demeaned herself with more womanly dignity, propriety, self-devotion, and high moral courage than did Elizabeth Bunyan, the humble wife of the tinker of Elstowe. “ *He preached nothing but the word of God,*” said she, with a clear, but tremulous voice.

But the judges were inexorable. Some of them, as Keeling and Snagg, sported with the sorrows or scorned the devotion of this heroic woman. And thus it

was, while innocent John Bunyan and his family were enduring a living martyrdom for the truth's sake and liberty's sake, the imperial profligate, Charles II., the crowned King of the realm and head of the Church, was reveling among his harlots, and converting the palace into a brothel. Truly there must be a DAY OF JUDGMENT! Not always shall the righteous say: "I considered all the oppressions done under the sun, and beheld the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter." They have all gone up to the vestibule of the great judgment tribunal to await the last dread and decisive day. Give me, then, Bunyan's crown, and the kings and queens of earth shall be welcome to all the glory of their faded diadems.

The *benevolence* of Bunyan—it shone in all his actions, for it was breathed into his heart by the Spirit of God, and kept alive by communion with the Bible, and with the various forms of suffering humanity. The worst wish he had for his worst enemy was *salvation*; forgiveness in heaven and on earth. It is the soul of his *Pilgrim's Progress*, that immortal book, one of the few gifts accepted by the WORLD: the charm of childhood, and the solace of age; the companion of the simple, and the study of the learned; at once the offspring and the admiration of genius; a perfect panorama of the inward life of the Christian, and a moral painting, not only truthful even to the minutest touch, but harmonious in all its proportions, and of a style of execution and tone of coloring, which commend the work to the applause of the world. So the Christian poet,

in the ardor of grateful enthusiasm, apostrophizes the memory of the Christian Pilgrim :

“ Oh ! thou, whom, borne on Fancy’s eager wing
Back to the season of life’s happy Spring,
I pleased remember, and while mem’ry yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne’er forget.
Ingenious dreamer ! in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail,
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile,
Witty, and well employed, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slightest word.”

Thou pilgrim ! thou wast thyself a poet of high rank in the empire of the imagination, and thy commission bore the broad seal of heaven.

The Pilgrim’s Progress is, in fact, an exalted epic, even according to the most philosophical definition of that term. Viewed as to its *matter*, it embraces striking incidents, charming episodes, salient characters, ingenious machinery, and high-toned morals. Contemplated as to its *form*, it includes a simple and natural style, apt and bold figures, fascinating narrative, pure and holy sentiments, sublime and beautiful descriptions. Regarded in its *end*, it transcends all the master-pieces of the human mind ; for, while in them we find patriotism, the love of virtue, the love of applause, heroic valor, or heroic suffering set forth as the highest exercise of noble spirits, in this work the grand cynosure of the author appears to be the glory of God and the happiness of heaven. Thus while the law of the epic in its three-fold distribution was unconsciously observed by this profound student of the human heart

and eminent master of the sympathies of our nature, he was at the same time accomplishing a high spiritual enterprise, such as was never reached by the aspirations of mere genius. And his position in the temple of fame, while sufficiently exalted to satisfy the most intense ambition of aspiring minds, be it known, was attained by no sacrifice of virtue to vice; by pandering to no passion, shedding no blood, trampling on no rights, human or divine.

We sympathize with Milton in his blindness, composing his undying epic. But that bereavement was even propitious to a deeper communion with the spirit of song. Not so the loathsome prison-house. Inspiration would fly at sight of its stone walls and iron grates. But God was with him. And that little sympathizing blind daughter shared the gloom and solitude of his imprisonment; shall I say to the comfort or the distress of her affectionate father, for while her presence cheered him, the idea that she must be there! this troubled his heroic soul. But *we* alone are left to weep over miseries thus wantonly inflicted. The innocent sufferers have long since slept the quiet sleep of death, the ambrosial slumbers of a heaven-blessed grave; and their happy spirits are with God, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Oh, what impulses of holy gratitude must the spirit of Bunyan feel as it contemplates the results of his incarceration in Bedford Jail!

THE SIXTH JOHN—WESLEY.

"Come, neighbors, let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God; he has given me all my eight children;

let the house go, I am rich enough." Such was the impassioned exclamation of Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, Lincolnshire, as he beheld the conflagration of his own house on that memorable night when among the SAVED was JOHN WESLEY, his second son, who ever afterward inscribed on his soul that memento: "*Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*" Yes, and "behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" The firebrand was not extinguished, but sent out a great light. It flashed athwart the deep sea that separates two continents. On what small contingencies do the greatest results depend! If the wall of that house had fallen outward instead of inward, the child John would have been crushed to death. If one man had not stood on the shoulders of another, and thus rescued John, he would probably have perished in the flames. If John himself, who, amid the alarm and confusion, had been left asleep in his bed, had not, on waking, sprung from that bed with great activity and climbed up that chest by the window, where he could be seen, he would have been simply burned to death, as thousands of poor children have been, but the record would soon have been forgotten. Yet where would Methodism have been? What events in the social, religious, or political world would have filled up that chasm? Conjecture here may truly be said to be "at sea." Imagination takes wing, and expatiates through the illimitable field without restraint and without certainty. Blessed, then, and welcome to our hearts is the doctrine that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and that he "foreordains whatsoever cometh to pass."

Many "second causes," or subordinate agencies concurred, under the guidance of Infinite Wisdom, in forming the character and influence of John Wesley, among which was a superior MOTHER.

Susannah Wesley stamped the being who was to impress himself on millions. Under God, she constructed the mold into which such a host of minds was to be delivered. Filial veneration pervaded his spirit to the last. John began to dabble in poetry. His mother checked this propensity, so besetting to a youthful imagination. "Poetry may be your occasional diversion, never your business." That piece of maternal wisdom has had its influence on the world.

As a dialectician he was more successful. At the University he learned to chop logic with so much skill, that he could prove almost any thing he desired, whether it was "too much" or too little. His mind was one of ethereal activity, and, like his lithe and compact little body, ever in motion. He was the incarnation of industry. Without the deep-toned passions, the melting tenderness, or the fiery impetuosity of Whitefield, he nevertheless wrought effectually upon the opinions and sensibilities of men, and that with a systematic energy, which sooner or later prostrated the most formidable obstacles. Specific and practical in his plans, he made them all *tell* on human interests, and indulged no visions of the ideal and the beautiful, which were destined never to be realized. He did, indeed, sometimes dream with his eyes awake, but then it was about small matters, such as ghosts, hobgoblins, sor-tilege, impressions, and the like, but these vagaries disturbed not the great tenor of his life, impaired not

the vigor of his movements, relaxed not the rigor of his autocratic discipline. Born to command, he exacted implicit obedience, and gave a new and impressive meaning to the term Christian Soldier, when he formed his army, and mustered the "sacramental host" to battle against the principalities and powers of darkness.

So, too, he was a rigid self-disciplinarian. He commanded his appetites, his passions, even his emotions; and sleep itself submitted to the government of his iron will. Taylor's Holy Living and Law's Serious Call to a devout and holy life contributed much to the furnishing, perhaps to the formation of his spiritual interior, while he drank eagerly of the spirit of the pious and humble Moravians. He loved their doctrine of assurance, their exaltation of Christ. Living eminently by method, he earned for himself, his associates, and followers, the name *Methodists*, much in the same way as other good men have been provided with the appellation of *Puritans*, *Pietists*, &c., converting reproach into honor, and taunt into triumph. An Archbishop called him a "*dark, saturnine* creature;" but Dr. Johnson said, "His conversation is good; he talks well on any subject; I could converse with him all night." His conversational powers were of a high order. There was a sprightliness about him, a fascination of manner to the last, that threw its spell on those who communed with him. Few could keep outside the enchanted circle.

Thoughtful and sagacious, he read men, and quickly discerned the spirits that could best be summoned as auxiliaries in his work. He accepted services with

dignity, and rejected them with urbanity. The abstraction of the scholar did not impair the politeness of the gentleman. Ardent and even quick of temper, he is said to have been placable and forgiving, though he could submit to no dictation from his preachers or people. *Aut Cæsar aut nihil.* This is the testimony of his intimate friend and admirer, Whitehead.

His labors were immense. For fifty-two years he generally delivered two, sometimes three or four sermons a day; in all upward of 40,000. They were often short, occupying fifteen, twenty, or thirty minutes, according to the necessities of the occasion. There might not be much in them—at least in many of them—but his object being briefly accomplished in one place, he pushed for another, studying and praying as he traveled. Persecution, opposition, abuse often met him, but these only nerved to higher endeavors for the good of men, and a more patient endurance of wrongs from the wicked. The whole strain of his life and labors was an unfaltering rebuke of the apathy, the formality, and the fruitlessness of the Established Church, yet he was a minister of that church. He was in it, but not of it, at least in spirit.

Nor did he preach in full the doctrines to which he had subscribed. He even denied some of them. He never attained to the lofty and soul-sustaining views which his friend Whitefield took of the sovereign decrees of God and the glory of electing grace.

Disparagingly has it been said that he made converts only of the "lower orders." It is his crown and glory. "To the poor the GOSPEL is preached." And this Gospel has been embraced by many of rank and intellect.

The visit of Wesley to this country was a failure. All men—especially all efficient men—must have their mortifications.* This Continent was to be reached by him in a different way, and most effectually does it feel his influence. Statesmen, jurists, divines, professional men of all sorts in this broad and free land, have become disciples under his name, and the poor man that escaped in reproach from Savannah, and embarked in sadness at night in an open boat for England, will be remembered to the latest posterity. Wesleyan missions, too, are circling the globe. Behold to what purpose one man can live!

He has been called “the most charitable man in England.” The accounts of his liberality are incredible to this money-grasping age. See what a “poor minister” can do. When he had thirty pounds a year, he lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. He next year, receiving sixty pounds, still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away thirty-two. The fourth year he received one hundred and twenty pounds, and, still living on twenty-eight, gave ninety-two to the poor. And so on through life. In this way, it is said, he disposed of between twenty and thirty thousand pounds, or more than one hundred thousand dollars! Avarice cries, What an insane waste of property! Not so the spirit of benevolence. It lifts its voice, and blesses the example. Consider, too, what immense

* “It is now,” says Wesley in his diary, “two years and almost four months since I left my native country to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned myself meantime? Why, what I least of all suspected—that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God!”

sums the English Methodists, stimulated by that example of their great leader, have contributed to charitable objects.

His physical constitution was superb. "Never was a constitution less abused, less spared, or more excellently applied, in exact subservience to the faculties of his mind." Three things in him wrought wonders—Temperance, Industry, and Economy of time—all systematized. His rule was, that his people should be "all at work, and always at work," like himself. And thus it is to this day.

In his eighty-seventh year, his eye was still bright, his cheek rosy, his natural force scarcely abated. But the time for his departure at length came. He died on the 2d of March, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and the sixty-fifth of his ministry. With his expiring breath he said: "The best of all is, God is with us. I'll praise, I'll praise." The last accent that trembled on his lips was, "FAREWELL."

XXVII.

The Genius of Goldsmith.

“No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had. As a writer, he was of the most distinguished abilities. Whatever he composed he did it better than any other man could. And whether we consider him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian (so far as regards his powers of composition), he was one of the first writers of his time, and will ever stand in the foremost class.” Such is the recorded decision of one who may not inaptly be called the Lord Chief Justice of the Bench of Literature, I mean Samuel Johnson. It is quite possible that the partiality of personal friendship might have contributed its influence to the formation of this opinion, for that great critic possessed strong sympathies, as well as severe antipathies; but it must be confessed that an enlightened posterity is so well satisfied with the judgment, as to feel no disposition to take exceptions. There has been since the days of Goldsmith no lack of writers of all sorts, panting and scrambling for the honors of literature; and not a few have there been who have thought and written well, some, indeed, with superior excellence. But to me it seems that the writers of the present century have been too much inclined to overstrain the machinery of the intellect and the imagination for the purpose of producing such articles of

literary manufacture, as would show well, and sell well in the world's market. Brilliant exceptions there are, but generally they were so near that Augustan age of English literature, of which Goldsmith and his associates were leading ornaments, as to partake of its spirit, and enjoy the transfusion of its elegance. The poetry of this age has become another thing from that of the time of Goldsmith. It is more ambitious, impetuous, and wildly beautiful. It more affects the strange, the striking, and the mysterious. It is fond of impersonations, as the gay yet troubled muse of Byron can testify.

Goldsmith had his personal vices, but he scorned to invest them with the charms of poesy, or to introduce himself to the public as the hero of any scene of guilt into which his baser passions might have betrayed him. With all the practical irregularities of a life whose course seldom ran smooth, he would never exhibit the beautiful form of virtue, for the sake of indulging the mean and malignant pleasure of a fling at her purity, nor the loathsome form of vice, for the purpose of decking it in colors not its own. When he took the pen to instruct mankind, he forgot his vexations and his vices, or at least remembered them only to make himself useful in the reminiscence, and instead of yielding to the dark spirit of misanthropy, strove to cultivate a genial temper of mind, which is finely reflected in his compositions.

His imagination dwells in a clear and crystal light, untroubled by those "chimeras dire," which have tortured "the vision and the faculty divine" of some modern poets. To account for this, we must remember that he was fortunate in his early associations, and

his childhood education. And thus, to quote the sentiment of Wordsworth, we see how "the child is father to the man."

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was the son of an Irish clergyman of the Established Church, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, of Forney,* in the county of Longford. He is faithfully represented by his son in the character of the Village Preacher, and in his poem of the "Deserted Village."

"A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich, with forty pounds a year
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place."

How different from many of the profession in these modern, I had almost said revolutionary days! The whole picture is exquisite. Neither the pencil nor the chisel could have conferred such immortality on the humble rector of Forney. Near this portrait, executed by genius under the impulse of filial affection, hangs that of the Village Schoolmaster, and both are as familiar as "household words." The best lines of this brief poem and that of the "Traveler" may be said to be stereotyped on the public memory. Their brevity cost him much more toil than those longer and looser works which he published under the name of histories, and for which he received hundreds of pounds. It was more the "good-will" of his celebrated name, than the intrinsic value of the works, that caused so high an es-

* Two villages claim the honor of having given him birth: Forney, in the county of Longford, and Elphin, in the county of Roscommon. The former is named as the place in the epitaph by Dr. Johnson, but late investigations have decided in favor of Elphin.

timate to be placed upon them. They were only subsidiary to those finished works, which constitute the basis of his fame; the product of snatches of time and of spasmodic diligence, that he might obtain the wherewithal to prosecute more important efforts. Gross mistakes in point of fact were committed by our compiler, nor did he aspire to any thing like the philosophy of history, or the patient investigation of moral causes. And in obedience to the great law of human action, his reward is according to his labor. For all that Goldsmith has done, history cannot be said to be the better. He has neither enlarged her sphere, nor enhanced her dignity, nor settled any mooted points of her jurisdiction. But his powers of composition were so excellent, the charm of his narrative was so engaging, that if they did not really supply the deficiency, they compelled the reader to forget it. When Johnson was told that his friend was engaged on a work of natural history, he observed, "He will make it as agreeable as a Persian tale." Yet it was a mere copy of Buffon, and might be called Buffon illuminated. Cuvier would not read it, but where is the poet that would not read the "Traveler" and the "Deserted Village;" where is the mind that is above studying the "Vicar of Wakefield?" "*Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit*," was one of the elegiac lines inscribed by Johnson on the tomb of Goldsmith, and this accounted for the success of even inferior attempts.

Oliver came into the world somewhat unexpectedly, his parents having for years supposed that they had received their last family gift from heaven, and that no more olive-plants were to bloom around their table.

But if this was the first, it was not the last time he disappointed them, so little was at any time expected of him. His father was too poor to give him a liberal education, but he had the privilege of being taught "reading, writing, and arithmetic" by the village schoolmaster, who, having himself led a wandering and adventurous life, was fond of reciting its story to his pupil, whose imagination was thus stimulated, and the romantic spirit within him nurtured, until he too resolved to become a wanderer in the earth. A poet he was from childhood, for at the age of seven or eight he often amused his father and his friends with his poetical effusions.

Thus, like Pope, he might have been said "to lisp in numbers;" the Muses rocked his cradle, and as he lay in it, "the bees swarmed about his mouth," as did those honey-hunters about the mouth of Pindar or Chrysostom. He scribbled verses before he could write legibly, and hastened to dedicate them to the flames. His mother (ah, ye dear, devoted mothers!) plead for her boy with the father, that he would give him a liberal education; but alas! his pinched income and numerous family paralyzed all hope of doing it. In this extremity, the Rev. Thomas Contarine, Oliver's uncle, stepped forward and rendered material aid. He was sent to various schools, and finally, in 1744, at the age of fifteen,* to Dublin College. The tutor, Mr. Wilder, a man of choleric temper, having been provoked by some of the wild freaks of Oliver, flogged him in a hasty and somewhat too public manner. Stung with the disgrace of this punishment, he abandoned his stud-

* Born 29th November, 1738.

ies and his college in despair, and with poverty for his most intimate companion, commenced traveling, he scarcely knew whither. Living three days on a shilling, and then selling his garments one by one from his back, to keep soul and body together, after fasting twenty-four hours, he received from a girl at a wake a handful of gray peas, which he declared to be "the most delicious repast he had ever made." Indeed, he now felt very much like the Prodigal Son, whose melancholy portrait is so skillfully drawn by the hand of the Divine Master. He was but paying the wages of his improvidence, that almost national failing of his countrymen. A place was obtained for him as a private tutor, but not relishing the confinement, he was off again with his savings of thirty pounds, which were soon spent, leaving him, as usual, destitute. He had, indeed, paid at Cork for his passage to America, but having taken an excursion into the country, the vessel sailed without him. Thus was lost his visit to our country. All this was characteristic. So was another incident. A poor woman, the mother of nine children, whose husband had been thrown into jail for rent, met him and begged for relief. Half his little stock was immediately given to her. His hand was as prodigal as his heart was benevolent, but his charity, like that of the sailor, was confused and indiscriminating, an impulse rather than a principle, and of little substantial benefit to any one.

Not Sheridan himself, though more profligate in his habits, and utterly without moral principle, could exceed him in some points of irregularity. He had never sunk to the degradation of Savage, another particular

friend of Johnson, who said of him, "On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass house among thieves and beggars, was to be found the author of the *Wanderer*, the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman; whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist; whose eloquence might have influenced senates; and whose delicacy might have polished courts." And Johnson accompanied him in his frolics, and sometimes slept with him in the glass-house, when they had escaped the sponging-house. Well might Savage write in his "*Wanderer*:"

"He stooped reluctant to low arts of shame,

Which then, e'en then, he scorned and blushed to name."

The literati of that day were a rare set of jolly fellows, into whose minds, whatever might be their "ideas of virtue," their sense of "delicacy," or their estimate of the value of literary clubs, the idea of a temperance club never seems to have entered.

Goldsmith was in turn destined to each of the three professions. He had too much conscience to be a clergyman. His uncle Contarine then sent him to the Temple to study law. On his way he went into the company of gamblers, and lost fifty pounds. He returned in distress to his mother, begged forgiveness all round, was pardoned by his kind uncle, and sent to study physic at Edinburgh. He amused himself much with the peculiarities of the Scotch, which called forth frequent touches of the humor so natural to him. His fellow-students he amused with songs and stories. He loved the applause they awakened, and the roar of the convivial table at his jests and gibes, quips and cranks,

was music to his ears, as it was to those of Burns and Sheridan. Fatal music! It could better have been spared. It is said that when in the progress of his fame he attained the companionship of the politest circles, he could never entirely divest himself of that grimace and buffoonery which he practiced in the genial and habit-forming period of his youth. At Edinburgh he studied by fits, dissipated when he did not study, injured his health, drained his pockets, damaged his mind, and did violence to his conscience. He concludes a random letter to a friend thus: "Fortune has given you circumstances, and nature a person, to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world, and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it."

Having gone through the course at Edinburgh, "after a fashion," he was about to leave for Leyden, to "complete" his studies, when he was arrested for debt, contracted as surety for a fellow-student. Two kind friends interposed and released him, one of whom was Dr. Sleigh, afterward emphatically his friend. He went to Leyden; caricatured the Dutch with genuine Irish glee, played deep, won pockets full of money, lost all, as usual, and having misspent a year at Leyden, commenced traveling with one clean shirt and an empty pocket. He resolved to make the tour of Europe, and for resources to "trust Providence," which he had so often tempted. He traveled through Flanders, France, Germany, and Switzerland, stopping at monasteries, and frequently at nightfall serenading the inmates of the peasant cottages in his best musical style, thus ex-

changing his music for their hospitality, and in general demeaning himself much as a member of the Order of Mendicants. The romantic scenery of Switzerland evidently kindled up his imagination, for in his sweet poem of the "Traveler" may be seen the traces of those vivid impressions made upon it by mountain, vale, flood, and forest, to say nothing of the living, moving pictures in the scene, the bold peasantry, their country's pride :

"Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.

* * * * *

So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar
But bind him to his native mountains more."

France, too, claimed the attention of the poet, as well as of the traveler :

"Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please."

He boasts of having often led the "sportive choir" on the banks of one of their favorite rivers :

"Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew."

And while he touches his French picture with some soft, some brilliant colors, he does not omit the shading of pride, pomp, vanity, ostentation, and "avarice of praise," which he considers the besetting sins of her who has since delighted to call herself *Le Grand Nation*.

The poet bestows, too, a page on Holland :

"Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain."

He accuses the Hollanders, however, of craft and fraud, and of bartering liberty itself. In fine, as if some grudge rankled in his mind, soiling the pure stream of his fancy, he denounces Holland as "a land of tyrants and a den of slaves," who can be purchased any time for gold. Perhaps the specter of a government officer haunted the imagination of the poet, who, of course, never relished an arrest for debt.

ITALY, lovely, smiling Italy, acts like a charm on his impulsive faculties; breathing her own soft inspirations into his congenial soul:

"Whatever sweets salute the northern sky,
With vernal leaves that blossom but to die;
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While seaborn gales their gelid wings expand,
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land."

His descriptions of Italy are indeed more vigorous and picturesque than those of Addison; but it remained for Byron and Rogers to give full breadth, tone, and coloring to the splendid picture. Byron walks through her majestic ruins with the gait of an emperor, his proud form wrapped in the imperial purple, and his hand bearing the scepter of power over all beneath and around. Or he seems like some mighty necromancer, before whom, as he utters his mysterious words, the shades of departed heroes and statesmen rise in solemn assemblage, to hear their sentence pronounced in a voice which echoes the judgment of posterity. And then, when he apostrophizes the sepulchered mistress of the world herself, we seem to hear the sigh of the "lone

mother of dead empires ;" to behold the frigid features of the "childless and crownless Niobe of nations :"

"An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose treasured dust was scattered long ago."

It has been said by the most eminent and elegant critic of modern times, that "our poets delight, in general, in a full assemblage of persons, or ideas, or images, and in a rich variety of effect. Byron alone seems to be satisfied with singleness, simplicity, and unity. His creations, whether of beauty or strength, are all single creations. He requires no grouping to give effect to his favorites, or to tell his story. His heroines are solitary symbols of loveliness. His heroes stand alone upon marble pedestals, displaying the naked power of passion, or the wrapped-up and reposing energy of grief."*

Goldsmith was a stranger to the dark, the impassioned, and the terrible. The delight of his genius was in gentler and kindlier emotions. At the same time there is strong and sterling philosophy in his poetry, indicating that he not only composed as a poet, but felt as a man, and reasoned as a member of civil society. In the conclusion of his "Traveller" he gives us what may be regarded as the concluding reflection on his travels :

"In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure:
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find."

* Jeffrey

Goldsmith returned to England in poverty and distress. His generous uncle was dead, and *he* must now rely entirely on himself, who had never made himself worthy of self-reliance. Still, his better genius, undespairing, whispered hope. That was *in* him which must come *out*. He obtained the place of usher in a school, accepting it with reluctance, and soon quitting it with alacrity. He then applied to various apothecaries in London to be employed as a journeyman; but his threadbare coat, his uncouth figure and Irish brogue, interposed insurmountable barriers to his success. At length a chemist pitied and took him into his laboratory. There Dr. Sleigh, a fellow-student at Edinburgh, found him, and raised him up. He went into the practice of physic, and obtained plenty of patients, but scanty fees.

Now (1757) commenced his serious literary exertions, which were auxiliary to his professional, though, as yet, he might be said to belong to the "ragged school" of medicine, as well as of literature. To a friend in Ireland he writes: "You may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter—left, as I was, without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many, in such circumstances, would have had recourse to the friar's cord or the suicide's halter. But, with all my follies, I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other." In short, he declares that, "by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet," he made a shift to live. It was, however, more *existing* than *living*, and he thus pathetically writes to his rev-

erend brother in Westmeath, how much "eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study, had worn him down:" "Imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig. * * * I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it."

Who would infer it from his cheerful poetry and genial prose? His melancholy was rather a thing of emergent circumstances, than a tissue interwoven with his constitution, like that of Cowper. It was rather the passing cloud over a naturally serene sky than the settled gloom of the livelong day. Will it be believed that he was under arrest when he wrote that masterpiece of gentle philosophy, the "Vicar of Wakefield?"

His friend Johnson, pitying his necessities, obtained the manuscript, and sold it for him to the bookseller, Newberry, for sixty pounds, and thus procured his release. But Newberry did not dare to publish it until the star of his genius and fame had begun to ascend to such a height above the literary horizon as to attract universal admiration, and especially to fix the gaze of those who were capable of appreciating its superior beauty. The manuscript of the *Vicar of Wakefield* lay on the shelf for two years, until his poem, the "Traveler," so short and so sweet—a perfect gem of elaborate beauty—opened the way for its introduction to the world. This was in 1765.

Sir Walter Scott has observed, that "the admirable ease and grace of the narrative, as well as the pleasing truth with which the principal characters are designed,

make the 'Vicar of Wakefield' one of the most delicious morsels of fictitious composition on which the human mind was ever employed. * * * The wreath of Goldsmith is unsullied : he wrote to exalt virtue and to expose vice ; and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors. * * * His picture is sketched, indeed, from common life, and is a strong contrast to those exaggerated and extraordinary characters and incidents which are the resource of those authors who make it their business to elevate and surprise ;" and it may be added, to distort nature, and distress humanity ; to corrupt the fountains of truth, and to derange the healthy functions of the soul, by inflaming its passions, and poisoning the pure channels of human emotion.

Goldsmith himself, in a letter to his brother on the education of his son, observes : " Above all things, let him never touch a romance or a novel. These paint beauty in colors more charming than nature ; and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive, are these pictures of consummate bliss ! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed ; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave ; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept—take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world."

The literary success of our author soon brought him into the company of the choice spirits of that elegant age—Johnson, Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick—

in whom consecutively we recognize the first of critics, the first of orators, the first of painters, and the first of actors; these, and others of kindred, if not coequal eminence, constituted a literary club, of which Goldsmith was no mean member, as was proved by his poem of "Retaliation." What symposiums they enjoyed! what attrition of mind with mind was there witnessed! what conflicts of masculine intellects! what coruscations of genius, wit, satire, and imagination irradiated that circle of literary *bon-vivans*! What an immortal line would old Horace have penned, had he lived after them, and been permitted to look in upon them!

In the department of comedy, Goldsmith was successful. He was himself, indeed, at times, quite the impersonation of comedy. There was a humorous twist in his brain which misfortune itself, and her companion melancholy, could never eradicate. In some minds it would have turned to a moral abscess, diseasing their entire constitution. In him it was really a vital, happy influence, a secret agent, disinfecting melancholy, and scattering those murky vapors so prone to gather round and obstruct the sunlight of genius. Nay, *his* genius even created out of them the most varied and enchanting forms of beauty. Fantastic they were at times, but exhilarating to the vision. Hence his comedy of "The Good-natured Man" is in many points a reflected image of himself in certain passages of his varied life. In some of his moods he was perfectly *Sheridanic*.

His best comedy is "She Stoops to Conquer." It was received with shouts of applause, intermingled with an occasional hiss from the tongue of envy—an addi-

tional tribute to its excellence. Johnson gravely declared, *ex cathedra*, that "no comedy had for many years so *exhilarated* an audience." The experience of the author here, too, contributed to the verisimilitude of his composition. His life was a series of serio-comic passages. His death occurred in 1774, at the early age of forty-five, interrupting his further literary plans, or rather *intentions*, for there was little of plan or system in his desultory mind. His life, like his works, might be said to be *miscellaneous*. Single productions, however, there were, like the "Vicar of Wakefield," "The Traveller," and the "Deserted Village," each of which presented a complete and beautiful picture, the colors of which are fresh and glowing to this hour. In the "Hermit" we discern an elegance of imagination, a tenderness of sentiment, and a sweetness of versification, which justify its universal popularity. Johnson pronounced him "a man of such variety of powers and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness." The great critic said that he even did a foolish thing well. His poetic lines were revised and corrected again and again. His prose was seldom altered. He had alternate fits of incessant and exhausting literary labor, and of equally exhausting indulgence, both of which, joined to the neglect of wholesome exercise, unsettled the foundations of his health, and conducted him to a premature dissolution. Let his example serve as a warning to the living scholar.

His dust reposes in Westminster Abbey, in the "Poet's Corner," near that of Gray, and his monument is adorned with a Latin inscription by his friend Johnson, who loved him in life, and lamented him in death.

XXVIII.

The Comus of Milton.

GENIUS, in whatever age of the world it has appeared, has commanded the respect and homage of mankind. MIND, in every stage of development, and in every altitude of attainment, must be an object of profound interest to mind. When, therefore, a mind of so high an order as that of JOHN MILTON appears before men, the fact constitutes an era in the history of intellect and imagination, and all the productions of such a mind are scanned and studied with a diligence proportioned to the dignity and fame of the author. The principal monument or statue in honor of the departed of course attracts the most profound contemplation, but around it the genius of the artist may have wrought some beautiful adjunct figures, worthy of their share of admiration. Thus, while the *Paradise Lost* stands in superior beauty and grandeur, a fitting monument of the transcendent mind of the author, there are minor productions of the same imagination, which are finely conceived, and exquisitely wrought. Among these may be mentioned *Comus*, a

“Mask,” or Dialogue composed in dramatic form, with no particular attention to rules or probabilities, and therefore affording the imagination of the poet considerable freedom in the exercise of its pencil. This was one of the earliest productions of the muse of Milton, one in the progress of which he tried the strength of those pinions, which were destined to bear him beyond this “visible diurnal sphere,” into those spiritual and sublime regions, till then unknown to the adventurous flight of the poet. Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, declares this to be “the greatest of his juvenile performances, in which may very plainly be discovered the dawn or twilight of *Paradise Lost*.” The characters are six only in number, the Attendant Spirit, Comus and his crew, a Virgin Lady, her two brothers, and Sabrina, a nymph. The scene is a wild-wood, and the poem opens with a long soliloquy from the attendant spirit, followed by the entrance of the wizard Comus, and the strange, unearthly beings of monstrous forms, now encountered by the lady, who has lost her way in the woods, and who is subjected to the severe trial of their foul incantations. The two brothers set forth in pursuit of their lost sister, and succeed in finding her, happy that she has survived, unharmed, all the arts of the wicked and the seductive.

Sabrina, the “goddess of the silver lake,” is invoked, and rises out of the “cool, translucent wave,” chiefly to confer a crowning grace upon the scene, and afford further opportunity for the exercise of the imaginative powers of the poet. There can be said to be little plan, or intention of plan or plot about

the piece. But whatever may be wanting in beauty or ingenuity of design, is amply compensated by the sterling value of the thoughts, the exquisite character of the imagery, the richness of the coloring, and the purity of the tone of sentiment. Many a "household word" is here recognized. Many a stem, from which we plucked flowers for our herbarium, grew here. Beautiful gems, that have been set here and there in the bosom of congenial prose, or, like current coin, from hand to hand, that have circulated from mouth to mouth, in elegant society, were formed in this mine. Those "thousand liveried angels" that lackey a pure and gentle spirit; the "airy tongues, that syllable men's names;" that "charming, divine philosophy," which is "musical as Apollo's lute;" the vision of those serene and celestial regions, that glow "above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, which men call earth;" the view of a sable cloud, turning its "silver lining on the night"—these, and many kindred images and sentiments of beauty, have their original expression in the *Comus*, as others do in other works of the immortal poet, who sought not merely to weave splendid visions of the imagination, but to embalm sublime truths for the nourishment of humanity in all ages, and to vindicate the ways of God to man.

Here, too, we find some of those sententious generics of history or geography, of fable or fancy; those classic touches; those suggestive single words, which instantly bring up before the mind a train of ideas, or a treasure of knowledge connected with the past.

These habits of thought and composition are fully developed in *Paradise Lost*. "The poetry of Milton,"

says an eminent critic, "differs from that of Dante, as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differ from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent, than on what they remotely suggest." Numerous instances of this might be adduced. It has been called electrifying the mind through a conductor. The mind of the reader must in some good measure co-operate with that of the author. We must be ready to fill up the outline which he sketches; to respond with our melody to the key-note which he strikes. There must be some music in the soul that is to appreciate the genius of Milton. Addison never earned a purer glory, than when he set forth his merits as by a charmed pen. Those words of enchantment—those forms of beauty created by the imagination of the poet, deeply impressed a congenial mind.

The *Comus* is constructed on the plan of the Italian *masque*, and belongs to that class of poems which do not depend for their interest on any complication of plot or conflicts of intense passion, on dramatic unities or strange developments, startling scenes and horrible catastrophes. The poem rather claims and commands our admiration for the Doric simplicity of its structure, than for any gay and glittering forms of poetic architecture. Though dramatic in its plan, the *Mask*—while it has the simplest form of the drama—is essentially lyric, especially in the carol of the Water Nymph and the song of the attendant spirit, which

constitutes a kind of delicious epilogue to the piece, and concludes with a beautiful moral lesson :

“Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue ; she alone is free :
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime ;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.”

Indeed, the whole design and execution of the poem is evidential of that purity of mind, that chasteness of the imagination, so nobly distinguishing all the productions of this first of poets.

There is no reason why Shakspeare should not have maintained the same elevated tone of morality and purity in his immortal works, but that he was destitute of those religious principles which purify the heart, and, indeed, clarify all the powers of the mind. The polluting habits of his early life, so closely connected with the stage, when it was in its deepest debasement, contributed to this malformation of his moral character. Let it not be said it was rather the “fault of the age” than of the individual. Milton was of that age. There was little more than a generation between them. But the poet was not ensnared either with the conspicuous examples of vice before him or around him. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, he shone as a light of superior brilliancy, entering upon the responsibilities and trials of life with a heart full of love for freedom, and of hatred of tyrants, just at that illustrious period of the world when the genius of Liberty had set her foot on these North American shores.

All republicans have a special interest in studying the genius and character of Milton. He took no pleasure, as did the great dramatic poet, in exalting the prerogatives, or setting forth the splendors of royalty. For this he was calumniated by his enemies, and even Johnson, the inveterate old tory, joins in the censure of the politician and civilian, while he praises the poet in such language as this: "He seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius, and to know what it was that nature had bestowed upon him, more bountifully than upon others; the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful." He could not stoop to trifle among kings and queens, or attempt to make them conspicuous by his eulogies or representations. He rose to the sublimities of supernal worlds. "He sent his faculties out upon discovery, into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new modes of existence, and furnish sentiment and action to superior beings, to trace the councils of hell, or accompany the choirs of heaven."

His communion with the pure, the spiritual, the invisible, strengthened the principles of conduct he had adopted in his anticipation of the judgment of posterity, and especially in his consciousness of being "in his great Taskmaster's eye."

In Comus, his youthful imagination luxuriates amid the freshness of its own beautiful creations, amid the wealth which was destined to enrich the world. Upon the ground of a pure moral sentiment the flowers of poesy are distributed in the most free and graceful

manner. There is no pandering to the baser passions of the human heart; no prostitution of the charms of his muse to the purposes of a secret, sinful gratification on the part of his readers; no seductive attempt to "impair the strength of better thoughts," or to weaken the sanctions of that immutable law, which binds together virtue and happiness, vice and misery. His amaranthine wreath may be wet with the "dew of heaven," such as descended on his own Paradise, but is never stained with tears such as innocence weeps, when corrupted by guilt. "His diadem of beauty" is set with gems of the purest water, and most sparkling colors. The "Lady," who is wandering in the recesses of the forest, apprehensive, perhaps, of being assailed by prowling foes, appeals in fervent language:

"Oh welcome, pure-eyed Faith; white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings!
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly"—

The high lesson breathed through many a glowing line of this exquisite poem is the dignity of virtue, the conservative power of innocence, the majesty of woman, even in her weakness, that weakness itself becoming strength, when blended with a purity before which the eye of profligacy quails with very shame at the suggestions of a guilty heart. In the picture of Comus, the fabled son of Bacchus and Circe, and the assailant of the virtuous lady, drawn by the attendant spirit, there is a powerful argument for temperance, a virtue so warmly applauded and so little practiced among men. Comus,

—“To every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmolding reason’s mintage
Charactered in the face.”—

The imagination of Milton delighted to portray the moral virtues, often grouping them in fine proportions and expressive relations. They appear in the midst of elegant poetry, gorgeous imagery, and all manner of glowing thoughts, like beautiful forms of statuary revealing themselves amidst the luxuriant vines and verdant foliage of a summer garden.

The scene in the palace between the Virgin Lady and Comus affords occasion for the utterance of noble sentiments in language worthy of them. She is supposed to sit in the enchanted chair, her eye resting upon the dainties of a delicious feast, her ear greeted with strains of the softest music—all the senses, in fine, addressed in the most tempting manner, when the Enchanter with his wand appears before her, and proffers his glass—the true “Circean cup,” which, being tasted, first intoxicates, then ruins. It is the intoxication of pleasure in all its forms and fascinations. This may be called a fable, but it stands for truth and reality too sadly and fatally experienced by the children of humanity.

The Enchanter opens his assault: “If I but wave this wand, your nerves are all chained up in alabaster.” The lady nobly replies :

‘Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporeal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.”

The contest proceeds, and it is one between Truth and Falsehood, Light and Darkness, Principle and Profli-gacy, the Powers Supreme and the Infernal Crew. The germ of one portion of *Paradise Lost* is here. Those conflicts between mighty opposing Powers, which constitute so much of the sublime interest of that great *EPIC*, are here typified and foreshadowed. Some poets would have invested this incantation of virgin purity with the "armor of tears," the resistless eloquence of entreaty, disarming the sturdiest foe. But no such tender, melting scenes seem to have been embraced within the design of the poet. His heroine belongs to a severer order of the chaste sisterhood. There is a sternness in her purity, before which even the Enchanter with his wand is compelled to cower. He plies her with his enchantments, presses her with arguments worthy of the father of lies, with sophistry becoming the most subtle and accomplished deceiver, with flattery that would turn an ordinary brain. To all this she replies, with all the energy of indignant virtue, "False traitor!" and charges home the guilt of his incantations, spurning the offer of all his delicacies and luxuries:

—"None

But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite."

Comus affects to despise the philosophy that is taught from the cynic tub of Diogenes, and ranges over all Nature for proof that men were intended to revel on her bounties, to "live while they live;" in fact, to do what those Epicurean philosophers taught, who said,

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Nay, he dares to asperse the purity, and insult the majesty of Beauty itself:

"Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss."—

Now does the Lady rebuke him with all the true natural authority of virtue for obtruding his false rules "pranked in reason's garb," and in the true spirit of Satan, bolting out his practical heresies with a fluency quite beyond the capabilities of the tongue of Virtue. It is true that in this interview there appears to be, so far as the Virgin Lady is concerned, a singular union of the romantic and the sensible, indeed such a preponderance of the latter as would have been quite inconsistent with the style and spirit of the drama, as authenticated by the masters of the histrionic art. Nevertheless, so great a genius as Milton had a right to choose in what form he would embody—through what channel he would pour the exalted sentiments and burning thoughts which it is the prerogative of genius to supply. If it pleased him to set before us naked creations of loveliness, or solitary symbols of vice and deformity, rather in the style of the statuary than of the painter of scenes, then let us be thankful for the gift, and honor the memory of the giver. Comus is rebuked by the Lady in such language as this:

"Nature

Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:

If every just man that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeeming share
Of that which lewdly-pampered luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumbered with her store."

That strain continues until the guilty wizard stands abashed, like Satan before the immaculate angel of the covenant, feeling how awful virtue is. Comus confesses his fears of self-condemnation. He felt "her words set off by some superior power," and in spite of his professed exemption from mortal ills, acknowledges "a cold, shuddering dew dips me all o'er." Still he resolves to dissemble, and as he is proceeding with his speech, in rush the brothers of the lady to the rescue, and scatter all things around them.

The attendant Spirit again appears on the stage, to exercise her guardian offices, and speaks at length. All the speakers are imbued with classical knowledge, and abound in classical allusions. This is just Miltonic. They are learned in Latin and Greek. And why should Milton consult the verisimilitudes of the stage? In the compass of thirteen lines of a song by the attendant Spirit, there are several classical or fabulous names, among them Neptune, Nereus, Triton, Glaucus, Thetis, Parthenope. How finely does he interweave them with the thread of his song, even, by his poetic art, imparting to them a portion of the melody that is vocal in his verse! He seems capable of setting to music the whole catalogue of the Pantheon, the Stoa, the Academy, and the Temple, whose sublime and impressive architecture itself suggests an analogy

to poetry of a high order. Then the Nereids, the Dryads, the Fauns will always be poetical in an humbler sense, so long as the woods and the waters shall be grateful to the senses or pleasing to the imagination. Even the horrid Satyrs are accepted among his guests.

This poem is full of MUSIC, reminding us as well of the beautiful bond—*the indissolubile vinculum*—that unites the sister arts, as of the author's passion for the science and symphonies of sweet sounds. A good recitation of his Ode on the Nativity is equal to a grand overture on the organ. He was an Epic all over. To quote from this very Comus, he could originate "strains that might create a soul under the ribs of death." If he did not absolutely invent the poetic epithet "rosy-bosomed hours" (it being derived from the *Rhododactylos Eos*, "rosy-fingered Aurora" of Homer), he interwove it most gracefully in his song, as he did all thoughts, images, and words which he deemed worthy of adaptation into the magic structure of his works. They were so many living, many-colored stones in that glorious temple of poesy (be it reverently spoken) "not made with hands," but elaborated and elevated to its towering height by those marvelous intellectual powers which are as much the gift of God as inspiration itself, and far more identified with the MAN than inspiration possibly could be. Oh, how solemn the spectacle, to contemplate such a genius with his eye fixed, like that of an ancient prophet, in a vision of spiritual worlds, peopled, not with the ordinary phantoms of an earthly imagination, but with beings of immortal mold and unmeasured power; his ear open to catch

the "ninefold harmony" of the celestial orders, as they sing and praise the glorious Creator; his march above the ordinary walks of humanity; his very soul taking wings, and like the eagle soaring "with no middle flight," but passing "the flaming bounds of time and space," and ascending from sphere to sphere until he reaches the throne of the Eternal, there to hold high communion with the Invisible God, and the august and awful associations that surround him, whom "no eye hath seen nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting!"

XXIX.

The Genius of Thomson.

HISTORY, Poetry, the Drama, the Fable, all have their peculiar points of interest, and as fields for the employment of genius have ever opened with promise to the diligent hand and genial heart.

Poetry, though in its highest style invested with a kind of regal dignity, subduing and swaying the hearts of men, is distinguished for its versatility. Beginning with the stately epic, that is employed amid such sublime scenes, and is conversant with the most exalted forms of character and destiny, we naturally pass to the dramatic, which is so deeply founded in the nature of man, and so conversant with the whole circle of human passions; then to the descriptive, which presents a wide range to the exercise of the powers of genius.

Next comes the LYRIC, so instinct with life, short,

but spirited, especially when taking the form of the Ode, as that of St. Cecilia's Day, or Ye Mariners of England. Contrasted with this is the ELEGIAC, with its solemn dignity and mournful tones, too frequently, alas! brought into requisition in this world of tears and sorrow, where the distance is so short and the pilgrimage so sad from the cradle to the grave.

Nor should the DIDACTIC be forgotten, which, through the medium of the beautiful, aims at the direct promotion of the useful, decking Truth with the flowers of Fancy, and presenting the imagination as the handmaid of Divine philosophy. Nor should even the EPIGRAMMATIC be altogether overlooked, since the sharp and condensed sentiment of which it is capable may in few lines convey to the mind more meaning than is often in other forms spread out on a page. It has created, and it has destroyed a reputation. Of all these forms there are subdivisions and shades, such as will naturally occur to a studious mind, showing that all poetry is by no means a creation of the imagination, however much that beautiful faculty may be concerned in so delicate and complex a work. There is much copying and combining, as well as creating, to be done.

JAMES THOMSON is to be classed among the descriptive poets; for, although he attempted, and even executed some dramatic pieces (to say nothing of the patriotic),* they have scarcely survived their generation,

* Dr. Johnson says, *ex cathedra*: "Liberty, when it first appeared, I tried to read, and soon desisted. I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praise or censure." The old Tory would not expose himself to the temptation of praising the son of a Presbyterian minister, nor even dignify him with a censure.

and constitute no portion of the corner-stone of his fame. The true range of his imagination was in the open field of Nature, where it might luxuriate unconfined, and wander untrammelled with the artificial prescriptions of the stage. He was a genuine landscape painter, distinguished for the brilliancy of his coloring, the beautiful proportion of his scenes, and the strength of the contrast between the lights and the shades. When a Scotchman rises into a poet, he makes a first-rate one; his productions are of the best quality. Thomson was born in the shire of Roxburg, Scotland, in 1700. He was the son of a pious, faithful Presbyterian minister, who "at forty pounds a year" diligently discharged his pastoral duties at Ednam, leaving behind him at death a name and a memory that "smelled sweet, and blossomed in the dust." It was a legacy to his children richer than thousands of silver and gold. For his father's sake many befriended him, while the conservative power of his religious education was seen in that exemption from the vices and extravagances so common to the poets and authors of the last century, and so freely described by Johnson and others, sometimes, by themselves. To be born in Scotland seems almost like giving a pledge for a good influence on posterity. It was of him that Lyttleton said he had written "no line which, dying, he would wish to blot." Nor should a mother's influence be forgotten. Indeed, how often is it paramount! Within that domestic circle was he led to that great fountain of truth, poetry, morality, and religion, the BIBLE. Like Milton, he drank at the sacred fount, and hence the serious spirit that pervades his principal work, besides those occa-

sional sublime flights which he successfully attempted. Indeed his Hymn of Praise, supplementary to the conclusion of the Seasons, partakes largely of the element of the sublime, ranking next to that of Milton, and to be classified with such as Coleridge's hymn, Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouny. The mother of Thomson was a woman of superior endowments, and possessed of an ardent and lively imagination to such a degree as to demonstrate the spirit of poetry as existent within herself. Of the secret, mysterious influence of the maternal constitution on the maternal offspring, as being quite superior to that of the paternal, anthropologists have said not a little. The mother of Lord Bacon was skilled in languages and learning. Mrs. Hume, whose son was the historian, delighted in literature and education. Mrs. Frances Sheridan was a genius, fascinating with her brilliancy the father of Richard Brinsley, and even extorting the praises of the despot Johnson. Schiller's mother was an enthusiast amid the scenes of nature, and a votary of music and poetry. How could she, or the mother of Goethe help kindling the inextinguishable fire in the bosoms of their sons? "From my mother," said Goethe, "I derive the faculty of representing all that the imagination can conceive with all energy and vivacity." Erskine's mother, a woman of superior talent, led her son to the bar. Boerhaave's was fond of the study of medicine, and Sir Walter Scott's mother studied and wrote poetry!

Even this slight induction of particulars might go far to the construction of an argument for the transmission of genius from mother to son, and even of a peculiar type of genius, as was eminently the fact in the

case of Napoleon. The Bible expressly says—"As is the mother, so is her daughter," *a fortiori* so must be the son, the object of her intense and devoted affection during the early and most impressible years of life.

In the early part of the last century, the study of poetry had become general in Scotland; the best English authors being read, and imitations attempted. It was the glowing age of Addison, who, among many excellent services rendered, unveiled to the public eye the immortal beauties of Milton, so long hidden by the stupidity, the sensuality, the prejudices, or the passions of the generation near him.

Thomson was no stranger to those strains. They touched chords in the depth of his own soul. His genius awoke, but it was to a mighty struggle. The divinity professor had told him that if he aspired to the knowledge of a theologian, he must curb the impetuosity of his imagination, nay, even restrain its fertility, and throwing away the flowers of poetry, be content to gather the substantial fruits of sober prose. This criticism settled his destiny. He felt the stirrings of the *mens divinator*, and determined not to repress them. Poetry, not theology, should be the star of his adoration, even though he should find himself in the embraces of its natural ally—Poverty. What a history would that be, the secret history of the struggles of genius, describe it as we may, whether as enthroned in a comprehensive intellect, a creative imagination, or a sovereign and decisive will! The world sees a little of the exterior: Columbus knocking at the palaces of kings; Milton looking in vain for readers; Goldsmith despairing of purchasers

for his inimitable Vicar; Byron lashed into fury by the merciless criticisms of his juvenile performances; or Crabbe, hunting patronage in the streets of London; Thomson thinking it a great risk to publish his "Winter," which, though last in the order of the volume of the Seasons, was issued first as a kind of feeler of the public mind, before he should embark more largely on so uncertain a sea. The public mind was prepared for a work of this kind. When Thomson was only ten years of age, Addison had commenced the Spectator, a work that in some points had wrought a great revolution in the public taste. Sentiments of purity, examples of integrity, the claims of true genius were held up before the people, and the way prepared for a kind reception of just such a work as the genius of Thomson was now about to produce. The love of truth and of nature must have been strong within him, since, although he had abundantly studied men and contemplated with enthusiasm the works of art in foreign capitals, he preferred to seek the approbation of mankind, rather as the interpreter of nature than as the artistic painter of artificial subjects or scenes. The Winter on its publication met with speedy favor, for it supplied an urgent want. People had looked on the external scenery of nature, so admirably fitted, as it was wisely designed to influence the mind and heart; they had been charmed to a certain extent with its beauties, but now those beauties came back upon the eye of the imagination, as if reflected from a new and splendid mirror of hitherto unknown power. The author was in ripe youth, about twenty-six *æt*. Then came his Summer in the following year, 1727, the

Spring in 1728, and the Autumn in 1730. Few of the innumerable productions of the muse have maintained so steady a popularity. The perdurable success of the Seasons is to be accounted for in two ways. First, the admirable choice of the theme. The poet selects for his platform the broad basis of NATURE. Secondly, the masterly execution of a noble design. "As a writer," said Dr. Johnson, "he is entitled to one praise of the highest kind: his mode of thinking and of expressing his highest thoughts, is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley." A third cause of permanent interest in this poem may be added, the general tone of moral purity which pervades it. The world is improving. It is advancing—if not to a state of perfectibility, as some enthusiastic authors, like Madame de Stael have dreamed—to a better state. Good influences are rapidly multiplying. The dignity of principle and the majesty of virtue command increasing respect and veneration. There is an immense augmentation of chaste and virtuous readers of English literature. There is a wide-spread and pure taste which can be pleased and satisfied with the crystal waters of the "wells of English undefiled."

While Thomson and Cowper are read, we will not despair of the cause of Virtue. If Cowper be the poet of home and its associations, of nature in her kind and quiet aspects, and rural simplicities refined by the amenities of life, Thomson may be considered the poet of the external world, so far as its revelations of organic beauty have been made to the physical eye of man,

and to the deeper observation of the imaginative student of nature.

The Poet of the Seasons held a graceful pencil, and one dipped in brilliant colors. He is a painter among poets, deeply enamored of landscape beauties. It has been said of the Greeks that they had no Thomson because they had no Claude. Not that they were insensible to the beauties of natural scenery, but "their descriptions of rural objects are almost always what may be called *sensual* descriptions, exhibiting circumstances of corporeal delight, such as breezes to fan the body, springs to cool the feet, grass to repose the limbs, or fruits to regale the taste and smell, rather than objects of contemplative pleasure to the eye and the imagination." The ancients were fond of the fictitious or the fabulous. Instead of drawing from the deep well-springs of life and nature, they constructed artificial fountains in imaginary regions, and amused themselves with the creation of the many-colored *jets d'eau*. Instead of combining beautiful shapes out of the elements of the real and the true, they relied chiefly on the fanciful, and even the grotesque, for the production of those effects which must be confessed to be often striking, however unpleasant at times to the polished imagination and critical taste of modern judges. Hence they produced no such poems as the Seasons. Their pastorals, indeed, may be said to exhibit occasional touches that remind us of that immortal work (Virgil and Theocritus will occur to the reader), but are, for the most part, destitute of its profound contemplation of nature, its pure and lofty philosophy, its sustained delineations of original truth and beauty; in fine, that

all-pervading spirit of genuine poetry, whose highest perfection could never be attained but under the benignant influence of a Christian age. The imagination of Thomson is more elaborate than that of Cowper; his diction more studiously elegant and ornate; his descriptions more gorgeous. He wrote as if he intended to commend himself with all diligence to an admiring posterity; as if determined to win the amaranthine chaplet: while Cowper pours out in an unaffected manner, and in the most natural expressions, the fullness of a mind as much distinguished for its simplicity as for its benevolence, meaning by benevolence an instinctive desire to do good. In the productions of Thomson we are treated with a splendid panorama, or work of art, founded on nature, full of enchanting views, picturesque delineations, and harmonious proportions, fitted as a whole to awaken in us an extraordinary enthusiasm, while Cowper presents us with a variety of delightful little scenes, every one of which is complete in itself, and suggestive of a multitude of useful reflections. Both, indeed, lead us up through the luxuriant paths of Nature to the Uncreated Source of all, tracing as they go those striking analogies, which connect the visible and earthly with the Invisible and Eternal. They seize on themes in their nature adapted to draw forth the imagination "all divine," and that, too, by the wholesome impulse of truth, clear, indisputable, harmonious truth, around which Fancy might weave her most lovely visions without indulging a single excursion into the region of fiction, and without entrenching on the limits of theology. The genius of Coleridge, instructed and exalted by a reverent com-

munion with such divine mysteries, has shed a new lustre on the creations of poetry, and taught the world that even the muse of Milton had not exhausted the resources of Inspiration, so potent to aid the flight of the poet's imagination amid scenes of tender beauty and awful grandeur!

It is obvious that the mind of Thomson was highly cultivated. Civil and natural history were said to be subjects of his study, and he was passionately fond of music, that celestial art, originating in the bosom of God, cultivated among the angels, and one of the sacred links that connect earth with heaven. If it be the daughter of the skies, it is the sister of poetry, and the mother of many felicities in a world where "man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn;" and oftener, perhaps, his inhumanity to himself is the chief source of his disquietude, and of the ultimate wreck of his hopes. The nightingales of Richmond gardens would hold the ear of the poet entranced for a full hour at a time, as he sat at his window drinking in those strains directly taught them by the great Creator. How would he have dissolved away in imagination under the almost supernatural melody of that Maid of Song, who is now leading captive with her enchantments the civilized world!*

Lend me your song, ye nightingales? Oh, pour
The mazy-running soul of melody
Into my varied verse, while I deduce,
From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame—the PASSION OF THE GROVES.

SEASONS.

* Jenny Lind.

In the kindred arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, Thomson indulged and delighted his taste. The colors of the painter, the forms of the statuary, and the proportions of the architect, all engaged his study, and awakened his admiration. Thus did the imagination of Byron luxuriate amid the classic forms of Rome and the stately ruins of Athens, though with a less genial and gentle spirit of observation than dwelt in the bosom of Thomson, who worshiped liberty more from principle than from passion, who, indeed, would have established a universal harmony of feeling, as well as of numbers among poets, and all ingenuous aspirants after the honors of the bays. He resembled Scott in the meekness and magnanimity of his disposition and character, as well as in his enthusiasm for the charms of the exterior world. Neither the example of Pope nor of Dryden tempted him to engage in controversies and quarrels, the entanglements of which so disturbed their peace and embittered their lives. "In adopting literary pursuits as the principal occupation of my life," says Scott, "I resolved, if possible, to avoid those weaknesses of temper which have seemed to most easily beset my more celebrated predecessors. * * Without shutting my ears to the voice of true criticism, I would pay no regard to that which assumes the form of satire. I therefore resolved to arm myself with that triple brass of Horace, of which those of my profession are seldom held deficient, against all the roving warfare of satire, parody, and sarcasm; to laugh, if the jest was a good one; if otherwise, to let it hum and buzz itself to sleep. It is to the observance of these rules that, after a life of thirty years engaged in liter-

any labors of various kinds, I attribute my never having been entangled in any literary quarrel or controversy." This was the spirit of Thomson, who "is not known through his whole life to have given any person one moment's pain by his writings or otherwise." He declined participating in the poetical squabbles of the day, and was not, therefore, annoyed by any party. He would not even consent to be offended, however just the cause, reciprocating the aggressions of the envious with a smile, a jest, or an apology for them. It required something stronger than such trifles, namely, injustice, oppression, cruelty, to arouse him, and then his indignation burned with a majestic ardor, coloring his strong and expressive countenance, which reflected the deep emotions of an intense and meditative soul. He was formed for friendship, hence greatly beloved by those who were acquainted with his virtues and influenced by his amiableness. The inspiration of his muse, like that of Cowper, was not fed with the passion of love. At least, he was transported by no ecstasies, dissolved in no paroxysms of the tender passion. He was capable of painting its features, as the sketch of *Musidora* proves; but, as he had devoted his genius, not to portrait painting, but to broad and comprehensive scenes, there he excelled, and through that walk he made his ascent to the temple of Fame. Than the *Seasons* no poem ever written, perhaps, suits better with blank verse. It would have been lamentable, indeed, to fetter such a genius in its excursions with the gyves of rhyme. The harmony of ideas and of coloring is so superior to the mere jingle of similar endings, that the most eminent of the tuneful race, like Milton, Shak-

spere, Young, and Thomson, in their best works dispense with rhyme. On the basis of these works rests the structure of their immortality. The Seasons are so characterized by general views, expanded contemplations, and circumstantial varieties, as not to admit in the verbal construction such "intersections of the sense" as is implied in rhyme. The "dread magnificence of heaven," the glorious efflorescence of earth—the mighty amplitude of the ocean, on whose "azure brow Time writes no wrinkles," over which ten thousand fleets have swept, and left no trace—the free spirit of man warring with the elements, or subduing them humbly to his own service, all those kindred sources of thought and expression disdain the shackles which art has prepared for genius. The poem of the Seasons is not distinguished for rigid method, though there be a kind of order of nature observed. The varieties and vicissitudes to be depicted are so extensively miscellaneous, that the very nature of the theme seems to forbid a steady regard to method. Nor is the general impression at all weakened by the fact, while it justifies those elegant digressions occasionally made by the poet, who, like the traveler, thus refreshes himself and those that accompany him. "He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life with the eye which Nature bestows only on the poet; the eye that distinguishes every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast and attends to the minute." Description having been the chief aim of the author, and success crowning his plan, he

was much imitated by a tribe of descriptive poets, whose works have not survived.

There is a beauty in the work arising from the analogy it furnishes, as between the history of the year and the successive portions of the life of individual man. The spring-time of youth, with its buds of promise and blossoms of hope; the meridian of life with its energy, its expectation, its glowing achievements; the autumn of life, with its sobriety, maturity, and abounding fruits; the winter of age, with its comparative dullness, dependence on the past, and inactivity,—these are distinctly marked periods, and each is amply suggestive of thought and reflection

“See here thy pictured life! Pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer’s ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame—
Those restless cares—those busy, bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights?”

But even the winter landscape is made to smile, as when the Creator spreads over it that radiant beauty, reflected from a bright morning sun, or a clear moonlight night, or when the fairy frostwork of the invisible Power has alighted upon the gardens, groves, and forests, hanging its millions of diamonds in the most fanciful style upon the myriads of vegetable forms, from the lowly shrub to the lofty tree. So hath old age its ornaments, the hoary head its crown of glory. How calmly sunk the venerable Wordsworth to the repose

of the tomb, his white locks coming not in grief but in gladness to the grave, the lambent lustre of an unsullied poetic life gilding his pathway down that valley, while the honorable chaplet of a well-earned fame adorns his tomb. Thomson was struck down in the deep summer of his life, at the age of forty-eight, when the health of his body was strong, and the powers of his mind were ripe; just at that period, indeed, when the Summer was blending itself into the Autumn of life, and the vigor of the whole man had scarcely begun to be impaired. What treasures of the imagination were suddenly and irretrievably buried in his grave! He was a chaste, genial, benevolent, pure-minded poet, capable of teaching, as well as *pleasing* mankind, which last has been held, rather unreasonably, to be the chief end and aim of poetry. We would recommend to the youth of the land to study such a book as the *Seasons* in preference to that green, flippant, flatulent poetry and prose of the day, so much of which is hawked about the streets, and peddled "in the gates" of our cities, at railway stations, hotels, public places, and wheresoever purchasers can be found. When Thomson departed, he "took a man's life with him," and yet a portion remains to earth. His mind, though glowing in other spheres, is still an inheritance for all posterity, as it was a regal possession to himself.

XXX.

The Genius of Cowper.

IN contemplating the varieties of human kind, nothing is more obvious than that some men are endowed with genius for the production of one set of results, while others are invested with the same power with a manifest adaptation to different results. So the interior texture of that impalpable thing we call genius, is diverse in various subjects. In some we find the development of extraordinary energies, in others the elaboration of the gentler traits of character. Some are eminently capable of devising, others of executing. One man is distinguished for the ardor of his imagination, another for the soundness of his judgment. A bold, daring temper of mind is indigenous to one class; a gentle, timid disposition characterizes another. The spirit of sarcasm, of irony, of invective, riots in the mental activities of some men, while that of tenderness, benevolence, and habitual charitableness constitutes the repose of others. Of the former, Byron might be mentioned as an example; of the latter, Cowper. They were both men of acknowledged genius. The world has adjudicated on their respective titles to the inheritance of fame. But how different the men!

It may be true that the qualities of Byron were more fitted to excite the stronger and sterner, as they certainly were to awaken the severer and more rampant feelings of our nature, while those of Cowper tend to

elicit whatever in man is tender, reverent, social, and sympathetic. He is eminently the poet of the home and the heart, and even when contending with the foul and formidable spirit of melancholy, he strives to make others cheerful and happy.

In one of his letters he says that his own experience contradicts the philosophical axiom that nothing can communicate what it has not in itself, for that he wrote certain poems "to amuse a mind oppressed with melancholy," and that by so doing he has "comforted others, at the same time that they administer to me no consolation." One can hardly believe that from a mind over which hung such clouds and darkness there could issue such a piece as "John Gilpin," or the "Report of an Adjudged Case, not to be found in any of the books." Yet the mind of man is wondrous! What powerful efforts will it not make to rise into a region, where it can behold the cheerful light of day, and breathe the healthful air of freedom! Cowper long looked upon himself as a doomed reprobate, a hopeless exile from the favor of God—but faith triumphed at last. That exploded absurdity—that a powerful genius must necessarily reside in a slender and morbid frame—seems long to have possessed even intelligent minds. Education is coming to be considered as properly embracing our whole physical, intellectual, and moral being, and the time, we hope, is at hand, when it will be no reproach to carry about a robust mind in a robust body. Indeed, we have among the intellectual magnates of the land men of massive frames and ample physical development. Look at the stalwart line of Secretaries of State for some years past!

But a poet must be a man of more ethereal mold. Why so? Behold Sir Walter Scott, that man of regal imagination, who breathed the spirit of poetry into the body of his romance, and transfused romance into his poetry, while with dramatic energy and verisimilitude he summons before us, on the stage he has erected, the stirring scenes and characters of other days, as with the wand of an enchanter. What an athletic form ministered to the commands of his kingly mind, for it was he who loved to say, "My mind to me a kingdom is." And Johnson, the critic, moralist, essayist, lexicographer, poet—yes, POET, for in his great mind the elements of the sublime and beautiful lay in all their wondrous activity; Johnson was a man of giant physical strength, of an apparent animalism too awkward to admit of refinement in this world. Burns, too, was a man of massive mold, yet how exquisitely poetical! The philosophy of the union of soul and body is as yet little understood. We want *healthy* men to conduct the affairs of the world, as well as to serve in the Court of the Muses and the Graces. What injuries have States sustained; what interruptions of the peace of the world have been caused by a fit of the gout, of dyspepsy, of morbid melancholy, of base intemperance, or by some paroxysm of passion engendered by the humors of an unhealthy body! The very union of the States may be endangered by these causes.

Had Cowper been free from those distressing maladies, from the depredations of that "fierce banditti," as he calls them,

"That with a black, infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in the brain,"

how much happier had he been, how much more might he have accomplished! Pity, not censure; charity, not severity, are due to the interesting sufferer, who had too much timidity to read aloud before his superiors, thereby losing a good office. That, however, was a trifle, compared with the deep fountain of melancholy that existed within him, whose waters no kind angel, descending from heaven, healed by casting in some celestial gift. Religion itself became tinged with the dark coloring of the disease it would relieve. To most pilgrims of Time the New Year is a cheerful season. "Happy" wishes then fly in clusters all around the domestic and the social circles. How does Cowper speak of the old year? "I looked back upon all the passages and occurrences of it as a traveler looks back upon a wilderness through which he has passed with weariness and sorrow of heart, reaping no other fruit of his labor than the poor consolation, that, dreary as the desert was, he left it all behind him." While indulging a similar strain of lugubriousness, his thoughts fall into the natural language of the poet: "Nature revives again, but a soul once slain lives no more. The hedge that has been apparently dead is not so: it will burst into leaf, and blossom at the appointed time; but no such time is appointed for the *stake* that stands in it. It is as dead as it seems, and will prove itself no dissembler." Mournfully beautiful! And thus had he been talking for eleven lingering years, long enough to make "despair an inveterate habit."

We do not recollect that any of the biographers of Cowper have given sufficient weight, if they have even adverted to one very natural cause of depression, the

destitution of any regular profession or employment for nearly sixty years, with no wife to love, no children to provide for. It were enough to wither even a joyous temperament. "The color of our whole life," said Cowper, "is generally such as the first three or four years in which we are our own masters make it. Then it is that we may be said to shape our own destiny, and to treasure up for ourselves a series of future successes or disappointments." Those years were spent in idleness, to the influence of which was added the effect of his mortifying failure as clerk to the House of Lords, thus throwing him upon any chance resources for the supply of the various wants of life. The final result was the providential overruling of the whole to the production of a consummate poet. "Had I employed my time as wisely as you," he writes to his friend, Mr. Rose, "in a situation very similar to yours, I had never been a poet, perhaps, but I might by this time have acquired a character of more importance in society."

He had reached fifty years before Fame had dropped a single wreath upon his brow, or he had even seriously courted the poetic Muse. "Dejection of spirits, which I suppose may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed." He seems to have thought that the season of winter was the most congenial to the operations of his mind and the productions of his fancy. "The season of the year which generally pinches off the flowers of poetry, unfolds mine, such as they are, and crowns me with a winter garland. In this respect, therefore, I and my contemporary bards are by no

means upon a par. They write when the delightful influence of fine weather, fine prospects, and a brisk motion of the animal spirits make poetry almost the language of nature; and I, when icicles depend from all the leaves of the Parnassian laurel, and when a reasonable man would as little expect to succeed in verse as to hear a blackbird whistle." The very spirit of modesty breathing through language deeply poetical! It is the province of genius, in its imaginative forms, to render tributary to its object the whole circle of the seasons, and to expound the thousand occult meanings of nature in her depths and her varieties, as well as to exhibit the more obvious images of beauty, of which she furnishes in such profusion the striking originals. Hear the voice of his muse apostrophizing even stern Winter:

"I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness!"

Bachelor as he was, he sought his chief happiness in the interior sanctities of domestic life. There his gentle spirit was nourished with the aliment drawn from the purest sources of friendship and virtue, and thence his imagination took its flights, not bold, but beautiful; not ascending to the lofty height of Milton's "great argument," but holding its graceful way through the middle region of thought, and fancy, and feeling, familiar to the mass of minds in any measure susceptible to the beauties of poetry. The critics of half a century ago, while they hesitated to admit Cowper to that high rank among the great poets which has been adjudged him by the verdict of posterity, confessed that his works contained many traits of strong and original genius, and

a richness of idiomatic phraseology seldom equaled in the English language. Readers of poetry had become so accustomed to the refined diction and polished versification of his predecessors—Addison, Pope, Gray, and Prior—that they were slow to welcome a new aspirant from the bays, who came with a free, unfettered, and even somewhat careless air to claim their homage. He might gather a few humble flowers along the sides of Parnassus, but to think of reaping near its summit was the height of presumption. Yet which of those poets has now so many readers as Cowper? Goldsmith may better compare with him for permanence and extent of interest, so eminently natural is he; but what shall be said of Dryden, earlier, it is true, than the others, but one who had long been considered as having passed into the apotheosis of the *Dii majores*? He may have one reader to five hundred who luxuriate in Cowper's parlor, alcove, and garden, with the Task in hand.

Then for purity, what a contrast between these last two! The Bard of Christianity, as he has been called, wrote no line, which "dying, he would wish to blot." To Cowper the sentiment is more impressively applicable by the suffrage of the public mind, than Thomson, to whom it is applied by Lord Lyttleton—and deservedly so. They both communed with Nature, the one with her minute lights and shades, the other with her grander forms and more striking developments. The imagination of Cowper, like the microscopic glass, detected the shape and tint of the very petal of a flower. That of Thomson ranged with the sweep of the telescope through fields of light, and distant spheres, radiant with beauty and vocal with harmony. Each ful-

filled his mission with dignity, propriety, and devotion, causing us to pray *O! si sic omnes!* But the nineteenth century has produced so much mysticism, such an amount of nebulous metaphysics in poetry and prose, as to make some honest people doubt the lawfulness of their veneration for the standard poets, especially the more intelligible ones, or whether there is any such thing as standard poetry. Coleridge, indeed, is clear, solemn, and sublime, when he approaches nearest to Milton, as in his "Sunrise Hymn;" and Wordsworth is most natural, perspicuous, and impressive, when he most resembles Cowper; but Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Bowring—what do they mean in half their poetry?

Cowper stands almost alone in having nothing to do with the passion of love, which has always figured at such a rate in all sorts of novels, dramas, and poems. It was not because he was destitute of sensibility. His life was a tender sentiment, his heart was formed for friendship; he was even an admirer of the female sex, and he intrusted the happiness of his life to the care and sympathy of female friends; but the romance of the tender passion was beneath the dignity of his Muse, while for real purity of affection, as well as of imagination, no poet has been more distinguished. He possesses the sweetness, if not the grandeur of Milton; and if he does not emulate the song of the Seraphim, who, in their exalted spheres, minister so near the throne of the Eternal, his strain is ever coincident with the thousand choral harmonies of nature and mind around him. In speaking of the influence of the "country" upon his mind, even that country which "God made," he says, with enthusiasm,

"I never framed a wish, or formed a plan,
That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene; there early strayed
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free.
My very dreams were rural; rural, too,
The first-born efforts of my youthful muse."

The regions of fiction he left others to explore; the artificial manners of a polished age; the martial deeds of heroic periods he relinquished to their admirers, and devoted himself to the socialities of domestic life, to the promotion of pure morals, and the elevation of public sentiment on a proper basis, and to a worthy standard. "He impresses us," says Campbell, "with the idea of a being whose fine spirit had been long enough in the mixed society of the world to be polished by its intercourse, and yet withdrawn so soon as to retain an unworldly degree of purity and simplicity." He listened with alacrity to the secret suggestions of the spirit of philanthropy, and at times rose to the solemn dignity and fervor of a prophet's strain, thus realizing the classic, nay, the Hebraic idea of the union of poet and prophet in the same venerated person.

Among those sentiments which have been incorporated into the thinking and speaking of men, may be found many of the conceptions of Cowper's genius, especially as embodied in the "Task," near the conclusion of which he ascends to so lofty a height, as to remind us of the sublimity of Milton. It is perfectly obvious, that before his muse took that flight, she had bathed her wing in the fountain of inspiration. The voice of the bard seems to echo that of the Hebrew prophet, as

he stood upon the Mount of Vision, and beheld the unfolding glories of the latter day.

The satire of Cowper was at times as keen as his own sensibilities, yet blending itself with a gentle manner and a genial humor, it disarmed all suspicion of malignity in its composition, thus augmenting its moral power. Vice, folly, and even finery, felt the sharpness of his satire. In his themes, as in so many clear mirrors, we see reflected the multiplied images of the spirit of the man. Truth, Hope, Charity, Retirement, Ode to Peace, Human Frailty, the Rose, the Doves, the Glowworm, Lily, Nosegay, Epitaph on a Hare, such are the subjects that wakened in him congenial thought and feeling. The lines on his Mother's Portrait are exquisitely tender and affecting, instinct with love, overflowing with affection, with that love which is never so intense as when softened by affliction, and intertwined with pensive recollections of the past. His pieces are not wrought with the perfection and coldness of artistic skill, like those of the sculptor, but flow from the imagination right through the channel of the heart, taking the most natural shape and costume of the moment and the occasion.

The great critic of the North, who sat so many years on the Bench of Literature before he occupied the Bench of Civil Justice, from which death has recently called him, thus pronounced his opinion of Cowper: "The great variety and truth of his descriptions; the sterling weight and sense of most of his observations, and, above all, the great appearance of facility with which every thing is executed, and the happy use he has so often made of the most ordinary language, all concur to

stamp upon his poems the character of original genius, and remind us of the merits that have secured immortality to Shakspeare."

Little need be added concerning his prose. It is known to have been eminently easy and natural. His letters especially are models. It is sufficient praise to say that Robert Hall, that master of the art of composition, thus speaks of Cowper: "I have always considered his letters as the finest specimens of the epistolary style in our language. To an air of inimitable ease and negligence, they unite a high degree of correctness, such as could result only from the clearest intellect, combined with the most finished taste. I have scarcely found a single word which is capable of being exchanged for a better. Literary errors I can discern none. The selection of the words, and the structure of the periods are inimitable; they present as striking a contrast as can well be conceived to the turgid verbosity which passes at present for fine writing, and which bears a great resemblance to the degeneracy which marks the style of Ammianus Marcellinus, as compared to that of Cicero and Livy. A perpetual effort and struggle is made to supply the place of vigor; garish and dazzling colors are substituted for chaste ornament, and the hideous distortions of weakness for native strength. In my humble opinion, the study of Cowper's prose may on this account be as useful in forming the taste of young people as his poetry."

XXXI.

The Genius of Byron.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago it was announced, in an Edinburgh journal, by Sir Walter Scott: "That mighty genius, which walked among men as something superior to ordinary mortality, and whose powers were beheld with wonder, and something approaching to terror, as if we knew not whether they were of good or of evil, is laid as soundly to rest as the poor peasant, whose ideas never went beyond his daily task. The voice of just blame, and that of malignant censure, are at once silenced; and we feel almost as if the great luminary of heaven had suddenly disappeared from the sky, at the very moment when every telescope was leveled for the examination of the spots which dimmed its brightness." Thus did the great "Wizard of the North" open his beautiful tribute to the memory of the Noble Enchanter of the South, within whose fascinated circle had been drawn the beauty, fashion, genius, and literature of England. It was as if the light of one star answered to that of another, or as if the music of the one responded to the dying strains of the other—each in his exalted sphere, when the "Great Unknown" thus uttered his voluntary eulogy on a kindred genius, not to say imperial rival, of the first magnitude, if the magnanimous spirit of the former could so conceive of any contemporary. The first fervor of admiring enthusiasm of the

genius of Byron having been cooled by the lapse of time, we are enabled to form a more judicious estimate of it, and of the treasures it poured forth with such lavish profusion. It is not now the image of the young lord we see in the brilliant saloon, surrounded by gay admirers, with a face of classic beauty, expressive eyes, an exquisite mouth and chin, hands aristocratically small and delicately white, while over his head strayed those luxuriant, dark-brown curls, that seem to constitute the mystery of finishing beauty about the immortal brow of man and womankind, and quite to defy the art of the sculptor. It is not such a one we see—a living, moving form, like our own; but we think of the ghastly image of death, we revert to the form moldering in its subterranean bed, relapsing into as common dust as that of the poorest beggar. But the MIND remains—that which has stamped its burning thoughts on the poetic page; it survives, imperishable, in another, an ethereal sphere. It has sought congenial companionship in one of the two states of perpetual being, as inevitably demonstrated by reason as taught by revelation. Byron himself might scorn to aspire after celestial purity and glory, but he could draw with a dark and flagrant pencil the terrors of remorse and retribution. He believed in the future existence of the soul, whatever words of ominous meaning might at times be inserted to complete a line or to indulge a whim of fancy. “Of the immortality of the soul,” said he, “it appears to me there can be but little doubt, if we attend for a moment to the action of mind; it is in perpetual activity. I used to doubt it, but reflection has taught me better. It acts also so very independent of

the body—in dreams, for instance. * * * I have often been inclined to materialism in philosophy, but could never bear its introduction into Christianity, which appears to me essentially founded on the soul. For this reason Priestley's materialism always struck me as deadly. Believe the resurrection of the *body*, if you will, but not without the *soul*." Thus there were times when the "divinity stirred within him," and the soul asserted its regal prerogatives, and vindicated its own expectations of the future. Nay, the sentiment must have been habitual, for how often is it naturally implied in the ardor of composition, as in those beautiful lines :

"Remember me ! Oh, pass not thou my grave,
Without one thought whose relics there recline.
The only pang my bosom dare not brave,
Would be to find forgetfulness in thine."

But our chief concern is with the *poet* Byron, not with the philosopher or the peer. It has been said that in reviewing the lives of the most illustrious poets—the class of intellect in which the characteristic features of genius are most strongly marked—we shall find that, from Homer to Byron, they have been restless and solitary spirits, with minds wrapped up, like silkworms, in their own tasks, either strangers or rebels to domestic ties, and bearing about with them a deposit for posterity in their souls, to the jealous watching and enriching of which most all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed. In accordance with this theory, Pope said : "One misfortune of extraordinary geniuses is, that their very friends are more apt to admire than to love them." True, they have often "dwelt apart,"

have been so engaged in cultivating the imaginative faculty, as to become less sensible to the objects of real life, and have substituted the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart. Thus Dante is accused of wandering away from his wife and children to nurse his dream of Beatrice; Petrarch to have banished his daughter from his roof, while he luxuriated in poetic and impassioned ideals: Alfieri always kept away from his mother; and Sterne preferred, in the somewhat uncouth language of Byron, "whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother." But did not Milton love his daughter with an intense tenderness? Than Cowper who a more filial and devoted son to the memory of his mother? A fond father as well as faithful son was Campbell. Burns, too, delighted in his "fruitful vine" and "tender olive-plants." In Wordsworth the beauty and purity of domestic life shone forth to the end. Southey had a home of love and peace. Scott was a model of a husband and father. Nothing can exceed the affecting tenderness of some passages in his diary at the death of his wife. Goldsmith was neither husband nor father, yet his fine poetry never alienated his heart from the softer scenes and sympathies of life. It seemed rather to augment their claims, and the clear current from the fountain of the imagination is seen sparkling with beauty and murmuring natural music in the enchanted ear. Even the voluptuous Moore is said to have repaired his fame and prolonged his days by settling down into the sobrieties of domestic life.

To return to Byron. He might be said to be unfortunate in his cradle. His young days were brought

under sinister influences and associations. The youth that is deprived of a healthy maternal guardianship, is to be pitied. Such was Byron's lot. Alternately indulged and abused, petted and irritated, his temper was formed in a bad mold. Never could he forget the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him when his mother, in one of her fits of passion, called him a "lame brat."

Now, as men of genius, being by a law of genius itself susceptible to strong impressions, are in the habit of reproducing those impressions in their works, a man of a sensitive poetic temperament, like Byron, and one so highly, so dangerously endowed with intellect, and a vigorous power of expression, would give to all these thoughts and associations a local habitation, a living permanence in poetry, romance, and even in history, so far as it could be turned to such a purpose. In his "Deformed Transformed" Bertha says: "Out, hunch-back!" Poor Arnold replies: "I was born so, mother!" If, then, we find the traits of misanthropy, scorn, hate, revenge, and others of the serpent brood, so often obtruding themselves in his poetry as to compel us to believe they were combined with the very texture of his thoughts and the action of his imagination, imparting to it a somber and menacing aspect, we must refer much of this melancholy idiosyncrasy to his early education. He was always grieving over the malformation of his foot. Far more lamentable was the malformation of his mental habits. But this, unlike the other, could be corrected. He should have exerted himself to achieve so noble a victory. Instead of this he resigned himself to the strength of the downward current,

and was finally dashed among the rocks, where other stranded wrecks uttered their warning voice in vain. There did he take up the affecting lamentation :

“The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree

I planted—they have torn me, and I bleed.

I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.”

Goethe said of him, that he was inspired with the *genius of Pain*. The joyous, cheerful spirit that pervades the works of men who, like Scott and Southey, were educated under auspicious influences, and by a healthy process grew up to manhood with an habitual regard to the sacred sanctions annexed to their physical and moral being, contrasts strongly with the morbid, gloomy, and often bitter and sarcastic temper of that poetry, which seems to flow as if from some poisoned fountain of Helicon. Sometimes, indeed, he forgets his fancied wrongs and real woes, as when walking amid the ruins of imperial Rome, and kindred contiguities, he throws himself back into the very bosom of classic antiquity, and pours out the purest strains of eloquence, enriched with the glowing sunlight of poetry. For a time the shadow of the evil spirit appears to depart from him, and the true glory of his genius shines forth without a cloud, while the sentiments that rise in his soul ascend to a pitch of moral sublimity beyond which the ambition of the human imagination could not desire to go. In the Fourth Canto of “Childe Harold” his power of conception and expression culminated, and the publication of that poem called forth a judgment of the Lord Chief Justice of the Bench of Literature, Francis Jeffrey, which almost deserves a coequal im-

mortality with the poem itself, and it is impossible to account for this splendid piece of criticism being left out of the recent collection of the elegant critic and essayist, except on the supposition that the most accomplished judges of other men's works are sometimes incompetent to fix the right estimate of their own. Genius does not always accurately weigh its own productions, since Milton preferred his "Paradise Regained" to his "Paradise Lost," and Byron himself was inveterately attached to a poem, or rather a translation, to restrain him from publishing which cost the strongest efforts of his most influential friends.

He was then a voluntary exile from his native land, that noble England, which should be dear to all great men, because the mother of so many; he was nursing many fictitious sorrows; affecting a scorn for his country he could not feel; defying the judgments of men to which he was painfully sensitive; mourning over the blasted blossoms of domestic happiness; seeking new sources of gratification, or old gratifications in new forms: in the midst of all he plunges into the arcana of classic lore; he dives into the crystal depths of classic antiquity, to draw forth beautiful gems, dripping with the sparkling element, untainted by its passage through centuries of time. He reconstructs the whole scene to our view, mingling his illustrations from those severer arts with the sweet and graceful touches of a pencil that seems capable of catching and delineating every form of beauty that can engage the fancy or awaken the imagination. We have been filled with admiration, we have been fired with enthusiasm, at some of these magnificent strains of poetry, noble ideas, burn-

ing thoughts, assuming precisely the dress, the costume, which best became them. Whether the poet takes us along the bank of some classic stream, places us before some romantic city, flies over the battle-field, luxuriates in a moonlight scene, lingers amid broken columns and bubbling fountains, gazes on the splendid remnant of statues that almost seem instinct with the breath of life, conducts us to the roaring of the cataract, across whose dread chasm, "the hell of waters," is arched here and there the lovely Iris, with her seven-fold dyes, "like Hope upon a death-bed," then upward passes and beholds the solemn mountains, the Alps or Apennines, scenes of heroic daring and suffering; contemplates the mighty ocean, "dark, heaving, boundless, endless, and sublime, the image of eternity," over whose bosom ten thousand fleets have swept and left no mark; finally, if he leads us back to the Eternal City, not as in her pride of place and power, but as oppressed with the "double night of ages," as the "Niobe of nations," the "lone mother of dead empires," sitting in solitude, "an empty urn within her withered hands," and draws mighty lessons from all these objects, in all this we behold the splendor of true genius; we feel its power; we wonder at the gifts of God thus bestowed; we tremble at the responsibility of the man thus rarely endowed by his Creator. That regal imagination, disdaining at times the vulgarities to which a depraved heart would subject it, asserts its native dignity, and as it ranges among more quiet scenes utters, with the solemnity of a prophet, such a lesson as this:

"If from society we learn to live,

'Tis solitude should teach us how to die.

It hath no flatterers ; vanity can give
No hollow aid ; alone, man with his God must strive."

Besides that ORIGINALITY, which is a distinguishing attribute of the genius of Byron, there is in his language a power of concentration, which adds greatly to its vigor ; some condensing process of thought is going on, the result of which is much meaning in few words, and those words kept under the law of fitness with more than military precision, yet without constraint. Few feeble words or straggling lines disfigure his poetry. That infamous effusion of a putrid mind, "Don Juan," has most of them, while it has also some delicate gems of beauty. As the last offspring of a teeming intellect, it evidences a progress in sensual depravity, and an effrontery in publishing it to the world, seldom adventured by the most reckless contemner of the opinions of his fellow-men, or the most impious blasphemer of the majesty of God. Indeed, his moral sense must have reached that region said to be inhabited by demons, who "impair the strength of better thoughts,"

"Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom."

It was of this last, deeply characteristic work, that Blackwood's Magazine said, at the time : "In its composition there is unquestionably a more thorough and intense infusion of genius and vice, power and profligacy, than in any poem which has ever been written in the English, or indeed in any other modern language." No poem, perhaps, ever exhibited a more remarkable mixture of ease, strength, fluency, gayety,

mock-seriousness, and even refined tenderness of sentiment, along with coarse indecency. Love, honor, purity, patriotism, chastity, religion, are all set forth or set at naught, just as suits the present, vagrant fancy of the author. The *Edinburgh Review* justly said: "We are acquainted with no writings so well calculated to extinguish in young minds all generous enthusiasm and gentle affection, all respect for themselves, and all love for their kind; to make them practice and profess hardly what it teaches them to suspect in others, and actually to persuade them that it is wise, and manly, and knowing to laugh, not only at self-denial and restraint, but at all aspiring ambition, and all warm and constant affection."

The opinion of admiring and impartial critics, indeed, was, that the tendency of his writings was to destroy all belief in the reality of virtue, to make constancy of devotion ridiculous; not so much by direct maxims and examples of an imposing or seducing kind, as by the habitual exhibition of the most profligate heartlessness in the persons who had been represented as actuated by the purest and most exalted emotions, and in the lessons of that same teacher who, a moment before, was so pathetic and eloquent in the expression of the loftiest conceptions.

How nobly different was Burns, the peer of Byron in genius—analogous to him, as well in the strength of passion as in the beauty of imagination; attracted, like him, by the Circean cup, absorbed at times in his convivialities, but never jesting with virtue, jeering at religion, or scorning the recollections of a pious home and a praying father. They rose by the force of their ge-

nus—they fell by the strength of their passions; but the fall of the one was only a repetition of the lapses of apostate humanity—guilty, indeed, but profoundly self-lamented, often expiated in tears wept on the bosom of domestic affection. The fall of the other was like that of the archangel ruined, defying Omnipotence, even when rolling in agony on a sea of fire. Even when feeding his fancy and invigorating his imagination amid the rural charms and sublimities of Switzerland, Byron thus writes in his journal: “I am a lover of nature and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue and welcome privation, and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. But in all this, the recollection of bitterness, and more especially of more recent and more home desolation, which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here; and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory around, above, and beneath me.” Or, as expressed in another form:

“—— I have thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy, boiling and o’erwrought—
A whirling gulf of fantasy and flame.”

Why all this? A part of the secret is disclosed by himself, in a letter to his friend Dallas: “My whole life has been at variance with propriety, not to say decency. * * * My friends are dead or estranged,

and my existence a dreary void." It had not been so, had passion been held in check by principle, instead of principle being subjected to passion. There is, indeed, too much reason to believe the truth, that in connection with great versatility of powers, there is too often found a tendency to versatility of principle. So the unprincipled Chatterton said: "he held that man in contempt who could not write on both sides of a question." Byron delights in sketching the most odd and opposite sorts and styles of pictures, and in abruptly bringing into rude collision the most opposite principles, as if he would amuse himself with the shock while he distresses the sensibilities of others. His powers were mighty, various, beautiful; but they needed adjustment. There was no regular balance-wheel in his intellectual and moral system. In another, or more painful sense, than the pensive and drooping genius of Cowper expressed it, might Byron say:

"The howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course."

His refined and exquisite sense of the beautiful in poesy could not be surpassed. His pictures of mortal loveliness are quite inimitable, and there is at times in the strains of his muse, in the very structure of his language, a tenderness, which it would seem impossible could coexist with that severity so often, so naturally sharpening into sarcasm, as if it were a part of the staple of his mind. The lash of criticism having first roused up the dormant energies of his genius, his first

impulse was to seize the sharpest weapons of satire he could find, and even the poisoned arrows of vituperation and slander, and with a power and precision of archery seldom surpassed, to take his full measure of retaliation. Nay, he became so fond of the sport, or so unable otherwise to satisfy his revenge, that he multiplied innocent victims, assailing his own relations, and even the noble, generous, genial Scott, whose maxim it was never to provoke or be provoked, especially in his intercourse with the irritable tribe of authors. Firmly and calmly Scott resolved to receive the fire of all sorts of assailants, who were engaged in the "roving warfare of satire, parody, and sarcasm." This sudden, bellicose production of Byron's impulsive genius—"English Bards and Scotch Reviewers"—cost even him shame and sorrow the rest of his life. But still he was ever fond of sailing on that quarter. His impulses must ever be of the fiery, fitful kind. It is a wonder that, among all his paradoxes and peregrinations, he did not pay a visit to the *Dead Sea*. That *would* have been a congenial pilgrimage for Childe Harold; and, then, for such a drake as he was to swim in its waters! The exploit of Leander was only repeated by him from Sestus to Abydos. The other would have been an original feat, worthy of the taste of a man who preferred drinking out of a skull to the usual mode of potation out of the ordinary goblets of civilization.

Severe, scornful, passionate, vengeful, as he often was, how do those stern features relax, and the milder sensibilities rise into tender exercise, when, as a father in exile, he writes :

“My daughter! with thy name this song begun,
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end
I see thee not—I hear thee not—but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend;
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart—when mine is cold,
A token and a tone, even from thy father’s mold.”

Thus, with a certain style of uniformity everywhere observable, especially in his characters, there is much variety of thought, emotion, and passion, evidential of great fertility of mind. If he does reproduce the same hero under different names, and even give strong indications of his identification with himself, still the wand of the enchanter invests him with so many brilliant aspects, places him in so many imposing attitudes, as to produce all the effect of novelty. His muse less delights in planning incidents and grouping characters, than in working out, as with the sculptor’s energetic art, single, stern, striking models of heroic humanity, albeit stained with dangerous vices. His very genius has been declared to be inspired with the classic enthusiasm that has produced some of the most splendid specimens of the chisel: “his heroes stand alone, as upon marble pedestals, displaying the naked power of passion, or the wrapped-up and reposing energy of grief.” Medora, Gulnare, Lara, Manfred, Childe Harold, might each furnish an original from which the sculptor could execute copies, that would stand the proud impressive symbols of manliness or of loveliness, satisfying even those intense dreams of beauty which poets and lovers sometimes indulge in their solitary musings.

“There, too, the goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty ; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality.”

CHILDE HAROLD.

This poem, indeed, is a perfect gallery of art, whose paintings and statues are drawn and fashioned from the life, with the skill of a consummate master, and the facility of a powerful, creative, divinely endowed genius. He places his hand on the broad canvas of life, and behold the figures that rise under his magic pencil ! They are, indeed, too often dark, stern, mysterious, and awful, stained with vices, and pre-doomed, for their guilt, to the pains of a terrible reprobation. With such characters the genius of Byron had a strange sympathy. Hence his admiration of that historical passage in the Scriptures, in which the crime and the doom of Saul is so solemnly set forth at the tomb of the prophet Samuel, whose sepulchral slumbers were so rudely disturbed by the intrusion of the anxious and distressed monarch, now forsaken by his God. Shakspeare, having finished off one of these dark and repulsive pictures, as in his *Macbeth* or *Lear*, passes to the sketching of more cheerful and even humorous portraits ; but Byron, for the most part, delights to dwell in darkness. Thus, in this poem, when the curse is imprecated, the time is midnight, the scene the ruined site of the temple of the Furies, the auditors the ghosts of departed years, the imprecator a spirit fallen from an unwonted height of glory to the depths of woe. Principals and accessories assume the somber coloring of his imagination, from which, however, at times, shoots a gleam of beauty that imparts

loveliness to the whole scene. Milton, with his almost perfect sense of beauty, and the fitness of things, would never have put such words as these in the mouth of his Eve:

“May the grass wither from thy foot! the woods
Deny thee shelter—earth a home—the dust
A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God!”

CAIN.

It was quite suitable for Byron to talk so in his “Cain,” but he has not unsettled the position of the world’s estimate of its first mother, so firmly established by Milton. He was, at the time, perhaps, thinking of himself as Cain, and of his own mother as in one of her imprecating paroxysms. Alas, that he should have gone on in lawless indulgence, insulting, both in poetry and practice, the sanctity of domestic, heaven-constituted, earth-blessing ties, until, after an abortive, ill-directed struggle for poor Greece, he sunk into an early grave at 36 aet., the very meridian of life! He was never satisfied with his earthly lot, not even with the rare gifts of his genius, nor with the achievements it made. He professed to consider a poet, no matter what his eminence, as quite a secondary character to a great statesman or warrior. Failing as a statesman, he resolved to play the hero, and strike for the liberty he had sung. But Fame had no place for him in this part of her temple. With the rest of the tuneful tribe, he descends to the judgment of posterity as a POET; with all men of genius above the million, as more deeply responsible than they to the author of all mercies; with all men whatever, as a MORAL AND IMMORTAL BEING, accountable at the tribunal of God.

Criticism would fail in any attempt to estimate the immense influence of his genius and writings upon the youthful mind and morals of the past generation—an influence to be augmented in a geometrical ratio in the future. What is written is written, constituting a portion of the active influence circulating in the world—not to be recalled, not to be extinguished, but to move on to the end of time, and finally to be met by its originator, where all illusions will vanish, and all truth, justice, and purity be vindicated.

XXXII.

The Genius of Young.

THE more the human mind contemplates the subject of poetry, the more deeply is it impressed with the might of its power and the immensity of its domain. Between poetry and the sister arts there may be an occasional comparison, but there can be little competition. For while it is common to them all to be conversant with the taste and the imagination, Poetry alone lays hold of the whole circle of the mental faculties, and calls them each into its appropriate exercise. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* there are specimens of as sublime reasoning as was ever addressed to the human understanding, while the instances of beautiful imagery are as abundant as the finest imagination ever invented. The *Poet*, according to the original meaning of the word, is a *Creator* and a *Combiner*. He is the true

architect of thought, who plans, arranges, constructs, adorns, and distributes into harmonious proportions. He "builds the lofty rhyme." To our own perception the dignity of genius never appears more imposing, unless we except those instances of extraordinary scientific ratiocination and invention, which have bowed the very heavens to the intellect of man, and laid bare their mighty mechanism, or seized, combined, and applied the elements of earth in such ways as can never cease to astonish us, however familiar we may become with their operations.

Great inventions and discoveries are counted by centuries, while poets of some kind appear from generation to generation, and not a few illustrious ones have, from time to time, adorned the world. It will be found, too, that the most *natural* poets have been the most successful, those who have touched the active chords of emotion which the hand of the Creator has strung in the interior of man, or copied with a faithful pencil the ever-varying features of the external world. Human passions are so strange and strong, so various and vivid, that he who truly deals with them; he who in the progress of his imaginative creations departs not from the principle of verisimilitude as concerning the passions of the human soul, can never fail to arrest attention, and secure admiration. Hence the perpetual triumphs of Shakspeare, who wrote of man, to man, and for man to the end of time. Those rich flowers of his fancy were but incidentally scattered by the way. The grand march of his mind was through the interior of the soul of man. Other poets have been skillful and powerful in the delineation of particular passions,

whether profound or impetuous, tender or terrible, gentle or cruel. Like the insect which spins its web out of its own bowels, they have woven together threads that have been painfully drawn out of their own hearts. Whatever the theme they have chosen, they have essentially described or illustrated the same set of passions. Whether they sang in the major or minor key, the character of the tunes was the same. BYRON is always reproducing himself with his train of fiery passions, his pride, misanthropy, defiance of God and man, illicit love, vaulting ambition, self-torture, and destructiveness in general, relieved ever and anon by all that is beautiful in creative poesy. MOORE, over whose birth, according to the doctrines of astrology, the planet Venus must have presided in solitary beauty, is forever melting away in the passion of a romantic, oriental love, while his lines flow like the music of a bird that just opens its mouth to let forth strains that seem all but involuntary. CAMPBELL, amid all his elegant conception and polished execution, constantly betrays his love of liberty and hatred of despotism, and is never satisfied, until by some single creation, like that of the Ode, he can give vent to the smoldering fires of patriotism within his breast. Those spirit-stirring Odes of his, if they do not, like the Pleasures of Hope, and Gertrude of Wyoming, prolong the pleasing enchantment of the mind in the perusal, do rouse all that is excitable in our bosoms. They are as perfect, as polished, as expressive as those beautiful forms of statuary, which have conveyed to us the conceptions of the Grecian mind, while in animation they surpass them, as burning words surpass the cold marble. Cow-

PER may always be found communing with the sweet charities of domestic life, describing the most obvious and simple features of external nature, or marking with his gentle satire the follies of society, with an occasional strain against every form of oppression. The genius of THOMSON spreads itself out over the whole panorama of Nature, giving us one vast and varied picture, the colors of which are found to be very enduring.

Now, in analyzing these and similar productions of the muse-inspired mind, or of genius as it produces other results, whether in the walks of painting, sculpture, architecture, or the drama, nothing strikes us more agreeably than the element of *likeness*. It seems to be an original principle of our nature to be pleased with resemblances. The accurate painting of a flower, a shell, or even a vegetable esculent—the sculptured imitations of animals, either of the fierce or gentle class—the pictorial representation of the homeliest scenes of peasant life—the poetic delineations of life, even in poor and coarse aspects, as in the pages of Goldsmith, Burns, and especially Crabbe—the dramatic imitation of the actions and manners of men and women who have figured on the real stage of the world, whether in comic or tragic scenes—all these never fail to interest, and that in proportion to the perfection of the resemblance. But this is only one element of pleasure, however widely diffused. A celebrated critic, with perhaps too strong a tendency to generalization, has said: “The chief delight of poetry consists, not so much in what it directly supplies to the imagination, as in what it enables it to supply to itself; not in

warming the heart by its passing brightness, but enkindling its own latent store of light and heat; not in hurrying the fancy along by a foreign and accidental impulse, but in setting it in motion by touching its internal springs and principles of activity." Then this must be done by striking a note to which the heart's living affections will instinctively respond, by rousing one of a large family of kindred impressions, by "dropping the rich seed of fancy upon the fertile and sheltered places of the imagination." Hence the power of what may be called reminiscent poetry, or that which leads us back to past scenes, or in the fertility and truth of its imaginations, so describes things to us that we instantly recognize their likeness to what we have ourselves experienced. The scenes of childhood and youth—the fireside enjoyments—the rural walks—the sail over the bosom of the lake—the mineralogical, botanical, piscatory, and venatory excursions—the wanderings among the sweet and solemn woodlands, vocal with the music of the heaven-taught warblers—the old school-house, and even the "old oaken bucket," in which we drew the sparkling waters from the deep fountain below—all these are animating themes, however minute, and we feel a kind of reverence for him who can reproduce them to our view.

The poetry of Young is not without its tenderness. How could it be otherwise when the spirit of affliction had so often troubled the fountain of feeling in his heart? The reading world is familiar with the apostrophe to the "Insatiate Archer," by whom the peace of the poet was "thrice slain." Hence the solemn tone which pervades most of his poetry. He seems to lux-

uriate in a kind of delicious melancholy, which gives a character and zest to the productions of his muse, and awakens our sympathy for one who has been so often placed in the furnace of affliction. His imagination, unlike that of Milton, which invites the light of heaven's day into his soul, rather chooses the night for its creations, and solemnly invokes

"Silence and Darkness ! solemn sisters, twins
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
To reason, and on reason build Resolve,
Assist me ! I will thank you in the grave."

With the whole strain of the poet's reflections, whatever be the theme, the solemnity and stillness of night seem congenial. Hence there is a profoundness of contemplation, a seriousness of manner, a sublimity of thought and devotion, even a weight of instruction in his poems which deserve the highest commendation. The criticisms of Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets*, on Edward Young, are unworthy the author and the subject. Indeed, either from indolence or indifference, Johnson was content to publish a meager letter from Herbert Croft, instead of writing a full and satisfactory memoir, like those he bestowed on Pope and Dryden ; a letter which is chiefly taken up in the indulgence of empty speculations, in settling trifling dates, or narrating unimportant circumstances, without the slightest attempt to do justice to this lofty genius, or to investigate the philosophy of his poetry.

Johnson does, indeed, say that "the Universal Passion is a very great performance," and bestows positive, though brief praise on his *Night Thoughts*. Here, in-

deed, he confesses there is "original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and every odor." The style and sentiment of the Night Thoughts are peculiarly favorable to the use of blank verse, so that the poet exhibits judgment as well as genius in the composition of this work. Amid all the reverent emotions that seem to fill his soul, there is a boldness of thought, and a freedom of utterance which demonstrates that the flight of that genius is on a strong and sustained wing. TIME, LIFE, DEATH, IMMORTALITY, with all their intrinsic grandeur, their mighty adjuncts, and vast consequences, constitute the themes on which he dwells, and which kindle the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." If he be not so exact, he is always copious. If there be lines that might be excepted to, or amended, there is great power in the work as a whole; for in this "there is a magnificence like that ascribed to a Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity." If there be a failure in any portion of his works, it is in his Last Judgment. Not that it does not breathe the spirit of genuine poetry in its conception; not that many of its details are not graphic, powerful, and striking, but that it is a subject to which neither painter nor poet can justly aspire. Inspiration itself barely touches it, and passes on to things more intelligible to man, more suitable for his investigation. It is sparing of description, and Young is the most descriptive of poets. Things gross, visible, tangible, audible, must necessarily be dwelt upon to set forth a purely spiritual process, quite different, we may pre-

sume, from any thing the imagination has conceived, or is capable of conceiving. The idea of limbs dangling in the air in pursuit of their fellow limbs is deeply incongruous, and would be ludicrous, but for the solemnity of the theme, and our respect for the intentions of the author. So the comparing the assembling of the atoms of the human body to the collection of bees into a swarm at the tinkling of a pan, has been justly censured by critics. Some of these descriptions present extreme cases of that rankness of metaphor, which is a characteristic of Young. Still, the poet is there, and the preacher is there, and it is impossible for a serious mind to study these strains without being deeply affected; as it would seem difficult for a thoughtless mind not to be made serious by the same study. They proceed from a devout and meditative soul, inclined to turn the ordinary affairs of life, and even domestic arrangements, to a good account. Young had an alcove in his garden, with a bench so well painted in it that at a distance it seemed to be real, but upon a nearer approach the illusion was perceived, and this motto appeared: *Invisibilia non decipiunt. The things unseen do not deceive us.* Nor was he destitute of wit, for occasionally he indulged in an epigram keen and caustic, as when hearing of the ridicule the infidel Voltaire had cast upon Milton's allegorical personages of Death and Sin, he extemporized the following:

"Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,
Thou seem'st a Milton with his Death and Sin!"

Much of his poetry is, in fact, seriously epigrammatic. Strong, figurative, yet sententious and striking,

it has fastened itself with a firm grasp on the readers of the English language; and while Dryden, of the same century, precedent in the race of fame, and Swift nearly contemporaneous in birth with Young, are comparatively neglected, except by scholars, Young maintains his place among the living classics of the language, read, meditated, and admired. The truth is, that with all his turgescence and want of that simplicity which is the charm of some writers, he strikes deep into the soul of his fellow-man, and we find, in fact, that what seems to be turgid is an element in his composition, which, like the leaven that swells the staff of life, is making the food he presents us light, palatable, and suitable for the nourishment of our moral nature.

Swift observed that if Young in his Satires had been more gay, or more severe, they would have been more pleasing, because mankind are more inclined to be pleased with ill-nature and mirth, than with solid sense and instruction. This may be true, but he would no longer have been Young. Doubtless, there is a class of readers who would rather feast on the failings and follies of others than be delighted with their virtues. Such would be more gratified with the scorn and the venom of Byron's muse, than the gentle inspirations of Cowper, or the serious strains of Young. But the fame founded on such a basis is evanescent. Doubtless, the shade of that proud peer of the realm of poesy would gladly exchange all its earthly honors and posthumous fame for the consciousness in the world of retribution of never having written a line to impair the sense of virtue, or to invest vice with such enchantments as

none but such a poet is capable of creating. Far different must be the feelings of him, who, while he held the pen of composition in his hand, felt the weight of responsibility at his heart, and sent forth to an admiring world "no line which dying he would wish to blot," no sentiment which, in the land of retribution, he would wish to recall. It were preferable even to be subjected to the charge of being gloomy, were the heart made better by that sadness, than to jest at sacred things, and deride the hopes founded upon the sublime revelation from God to man.

The *contrasts* of Young constitute one secret of his impressive power. Thus :

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful is man !

* * * * *

An heir of glory, a frail child of dust,
Helpless immortal, insect infinite,
A worm, a god.—I tremble at myself !"

No man can attain to the true dignity of his nature without a long and patient introversion of the observing faculties. If "the proper study of mankind is man," the greatest proficiency is attained by studying ourselves, by descending into the interior chambers of the soul, and observing the operation of its complex machinery. Nobly does Young say,

"Man, know thyself, all wisdom centers there.
To none man seems ignoble but to man !"

If Michael has fought our battles, and Raphael has sung our triumphs, and Gabriel has spread his wings

from distant worlds to bring messages for the benefit of man, why should he live so far below his dignity?

Young followed in the track of Milton, when he taught us to believe more firmly in the proximity of celestial spirits to the dwellings of humanity. In yielding our faith to such a theory, we are not merely led along by a poet's fancy, we are warranted by the authority of the inspired oracles themselves, which speak of the angels as "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." A beautiful idea is that of the secret interlinking of those heavenly ones with us poor visible pilgrims of earth. How often, when fainting in the wilderness, like the poor Egyptian mother, has the angel of hope appeared to revive our spirits, and point to some grateful fountain in the desert, unseen by us, because our eyes were dimmed with tears! And so, under the same kind Providence, we are taught that friendship is something more than "a name."

"Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene
Resumes them to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods,
All discipline indulgence, on the whole."

There is, in fact, in the poems of Young a mass of true philosophy, which, were it but drawn out in scholastic form, would constitute quite a volume of sound instruction on good ethical principles. The purity of his productions is most exemplary, considering the license indulged by his contemporaries, and the fact that the age of Anne had by no means freed itself from the pestiferous influence of the age of Charles II., the

royal debauchee, who enthroned vice in his court, while he banished virtue to seek a refuge among the despised Puritans. Dryden himself sometimes dabbled in pollution, nor was Swift altogether free from the charge of pandering to the baser passions of the human heart. But the most bitter enemy of Young could never bring such an accusation against him.

How much domestic experiences—in fact, the general fortunes of a man's life have to do with shaping and coloring his works as an author, it is not necessary to discuss. The connection is as important as it is undoubted. Of this the history of authors is an abundant proof. In his preface to "The Complaint," Young says that "the occasion of the poem is real, not fictitious, and the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer."

Much of the character and achievements of the executive portion of our race depend on the interior discipline of the mind, not alone the intellectual, but the moral discipline to which men are subjected. The true heroes in every department of exalted action have been thus tried in the crucible. Such names as have been given to a deathless fame will immediately suggest a train of trials, the history of which has been disclosed to the world. How great a portion has been endured in secret, we can only conjecture. Take two great names in England's literary history, MILTON and SCOTT, for the latter was a thorough English loyalist, though a true Scotchman. What burdens these men carried through life! On genial tempers such discipline has the happiest effects. On the sullen and morose it descends like water on the rock. Many a ten-

der thought, many a touching description have we from the author, in consequence of the heart-crushing he experienced by his repeated bereavements.

Some authors have a peculiar faculty of diluting a sentiment, until its spirit and vigor have almost evaporated. The thought may be original, it may be valuable, but they spread it out as the gold-beater spreads gold-leaf, until it becomes all but impalpable. Not so with Young. There will be found in his works a great amount of bullion, weighty and valuable. Nor is he wanting in variety. For although, as his poetry falls upon the ear, there may be a seeming sameness in it, there is, in fact, in the staple of it great diversity of thought, as well as richness of metaphor. There are poets who have had a finer ear for the harmony of numbers, and the impressive melody of well-chosen cadences, but who are deficient in that sustained vigor which characterizes Young.

He has a peculiar versification, so much his own, that it would be recognized by the ear as soon as the face of a friend by the eye, on the repetition of a half dozen lines, even if they had never before been read. He is no copyist, except from the book of nature and the heart of man. "He seems to have laid up," says Johnson, "no stores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment. Yet I have reason to believe that when once he had formed a new design, he then labored it with very patient industry, and that he composed with great labor and frequent revisions. His verses are formed by no certain model."

His antithesis, which is perpetual, is not the polished

and carefully balanced antithesis of Pope, but of Young, sudden, striking, weighty, and making a constant demand on exclamation points. Witness this bold succession of lines :

“ Is it in words to paint you, oh, ye fallen ?
Fall'n from the wings of reason and of hope !
Erect in stature, prone in appetite !
Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain !
Lovers of argument, averse to sense,
Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains !
Lords of the wide creation, and the shame !
More *senseless* than the *irrationals* you scorn,
More base than those you rule, than those you pity !
Deepest in woe from means of boundless bliss ;
Ye cursed by blessings infinite ! because
Most highly favored, most profoundly lost !
Ye motly mass of contradiction strong !”

A reader who should travel through the pages of Young, at consecutive sittings, would feel that an overwhelming impression was made upon his mind. What it would definitely and distinctively be, it might be more difficult to say than what it would *not* be. It is certain the sense of the obligation of virtue would not be relaxed, the consciousness of immortality would not be enfeebled, the anticipations of the retributive period would not be impaired, nor the dignity and destiny of man be diminished in their apparent importance.

His poetry is not only descriptive, but didactic, and that in a different sense from the didactics of Pope. It is a serious improvement on the ethical tone of that ambitious poet, for it reverently draws from a higher source the motives for obedience to the lessons it inculcates.

“In all his works,” says Blair, “the marks of strong genius appear. His ‘Universal Passion’ possesses the full merit of that animated conciseness of style, and lively description of characters, which I mentioned as particularly requisite in satirical and didactic compositions. Though his wit may often be thought too sparkling, and his sentences too pointed, yet the vivacity is so great as to entertain every reader. In the ‘Night Thoughts,’ there is much energy of expression; in the first three there are several pathetic passages, and scattered through them all happy images and allusions, as well as pious reflections occur.”

If, as rhetoricians have pronounced, description be a good test of a poetical imagination, distinguishing an original from a second-rate genius, a creator from a copyist, then must Young claim and hold a high rank in the tuneful tribe. In him we have exemplified a poet of bold conceptions and decided originality in his chosen style of composition, with an imagination inventive and luxuriant indeed, if not “all compact,” the very exaggerations of which, while evidential of genius, aim at the support of the principles of virtue, and the extinction of falsehood and hypocrisy; an imagination which, if it sometimes does violence to a delicate and fastidious taste, never offends our moral sense, or tinges with a blush the cheek of innocence.

His poetry is the effusion of a mind that held communion with sacred thoughts, and solemn associations. In some parts it approaches even the dignity and grandeur of the epic; for that one thought which was enthroned in the mind of Milton—“the vindication of the ways of God to men”—seems to have been regnant

also in that of Young, and thus was his spirit ever kept in awe in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, having little of the fear of God before its eyes. It was an age of *free-thinkers*—men who, in the plenitude of their vanity, boasted in that self-bestowed name. Young demanded of them to “look on truth unbroken and entire,” on truth in the SYSTEM OF GOD.

“*Parts*, like half sentences, confound ; the whole
Conveys the sense, and God is understood,
Who not in fragments writes to human race ;
Read his whole volume, skeptic ! *then* reply !
This, this is *thinking free*, a thought that grasps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.”

Let the reader peruse the dozen succeeding lines in Night VII., The Complaint, and he will be struck with their power and sublimity. If, indeed, my criticism should allure him to the perusal or reperusal of the whole volume, I shall not have written in vain.

XXXIII.

The Genius of Scott.

It is not alone the literary man, the student of history or the “lover of fiction,” that is interested in the character and achievements of the eminent Scotchman, who in the early part of this century so completely filled the trump of fame. The Christian philosopher and moralist has much to learn from the study of his genius and

character. The man who could by the enchantment of the pen evoke £15,000 a year from the human pocket (that most reluctant of all appendages to man) must be a wizard indeed. But the man who could do this without having his head turned, must be more than a wizard. "A most composed, invincible man," said Carlyle, "in difficulty and distress having no discouragement, Samson-like, carrying off on his strong Samson shoulders the gates that would imprison him; in danger and menace, laughing at the whisper of fear. And then with such a sunny current of true humor and humanity, a free, joyful sympathy with so many things; what of fire he had, all lying so beautifully latent, as radial, latent heat, as fruitful internal warmth of life; a most robust, *healthy* man!" And thus he rings the changes upon that adjective *healthy*, applying it to Scott's whole nature, intellectual, moral, and physical, as if there was nothing morbid in the man, not even in his excessive fondness for old musty ballads and uncouth border rhymes, or in his excessive aversion to the spiritual in religion or the democratic in politics. Many bold, noble, and generous traits, however, he did possess. And whence did he derive them? "Let Scott thank JOHN KNOX," says the same critic, "for he owed him much, little as he dreamed of debt in that quarter! No Scotchman of his time was more thoroughly Scotch than Walter Scott; the good and the not so good, which all Scotchmen inherit, ran through every fiber of him." He was not merely a genius, but a multifiform genius. There was a bewitching variety about him. The whole of his moral being was built on a basis of good-nature, which scarcely ever forsook him

in the midst of his greatest perplexities and provocations. He was a clever, companionable youth. Here was his danger, and though he calls himself a "deep drinker," like Johnson, who said of himself that if he drank any, he must drink to excess, he controlled himself and did not make a wreck of his constitution, though he injured its giant strength, consolidated, as it was, by the most vigorous exercise, and animated and sustained, as it was, by a most triumphant spirit. He was a poet of strong and discursive imagination, drawing his materials from his own Scotland, enamored of the rudest scenery and the roughest chivalry; delighting in dog scenes and battle scenes; loving equally the winding of the hunter's horn and the notes of the martial bugle, yet occasionally stooping to admire a dew-drop or to bless a flower. He was a prince among literary men, and a literary man among princes; an admirer of royalty, and a model of loyalty; an ally of the aristocracy, and an enemy to democracy. He was an historian, though a hurried and somewhat careless one; a biographer, most pictorial and enchanting, though not always correct; an antiquarian, fumbling among all musty things; a novelist, creating all manner of scenic wonders; a critic, learned in the formidable science, and sitting in solemn judgment on the perpetrators of *books*, though always "leaning to the side of mercy;" for he was a kind and generous friend to meritorious young authors; he was a farmer, a botanist, arborist, and horticulturist; an odd kind of amateur architect, building not only his complicated Abbotsford homestead, but many "castles in the air," if, indeed, that was not one of them; he was a "sleeping partner" in great

book-selling houses—palaces where regal monarchs in the kingdom of literature swayed the scepter, yet probably *slept* less than any of them—the Cadells, the Balantynes, the Murrays; for his wakeful energies were prodigious; he was a Tory of the straitest sect, yet even his Toryism did not seem to contract the natural amplitude of his heart or to shrivel the generous sensibilities of his nature. He even presumed to be a Theologian and to write sermons, though they are “no great things.” Yet, if they do not immortalize him, they indicate the versatility of his genius. He wrote two sermons on the Atonement, to get money for a divinity student. He was less scrupulous than Robert Hall, who, when tempted with a thousand guineas for writing out some of his manuscripts for the press, replied: “No, no, that will not do; I shall always be thinking of the *guineas* when I am writing.” So he declined. Scott was at times profane, not only by what he put into the mouths of others, but by what he wrote in his own diary. Strange that his son-in-law, Lockhart, if he could not see the deformity which is thus reflected on the subject of his biography, should not have felt some decent regard for the taste of a virtuous community, cis-Atlantic or trans-Atlantic, and for the dignity of literature itself. The truth is, his notions of morality were free and easy. They were not *Scotch*. He kept no *Scotch Sabbath*. The sanctity of domestic life was, however, always precious to him, as it was *not* to his profligate contemporary, Byron. “When he departed, he took a man’s life along with him.” He became very serious when he approached death, and demanded that the Scriptures be read to him—nothing

else would do then—that only, for a dying man. “Lockhart,” he said; with his last breath, “be a good man, be virtuous, be religious. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.” Remember this, all ye worshipers of literature.

XXXIV.

Cowper and Byron Contrasted.

WHAT a strange thing is poetry! What a mystery the human mind! What a paradox the inspiration of genius! Could two such men belong to the same kingdom of mind? Was the imagination the same faculty in both? Yes, the substratum was the same;—the superstructure how different! Both were Englishmen, a proud name to bear even in this intellectual age, for the shadow of England’s power flies over the earth;—not only of her military power, her vast political influence, and her scientific fame, but her poetry has filled the world with its impulses. The English muse has an empire of her own, and noble ministers have sustained her queenly prerogative. She has a temple of splendid proportions, and priests of immortal name have officiated in its courts. A long line of illustrious men rises before us, and we are almost overpowered by the majesty of their presence. Still, they were *men* like ourselves; of like passions, if not of like endow-

ments. *There*, indeed, is the mighty difference; the high and mysterious faculty is decreed by heaven to one only among millions; the elect sons and daughters of genius and imagination are indeed few in number. This itself is one of the elements of their high distinction, like that which is conferred on those superior orbs of heaven, which stand out in such brightness amid the multitude of kindred worlds that adorn the firmament.

Cowper and Byron are among the princes, yet how different! Incredible, that they belonged to the same nation—the same species! But the fiends of hell were once angelic spirits. And man, that was “made a little lower than the angels,” if in the wondrous progress of redemption he does not rise above them, sinks irretrievably below them.

“With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.”

The genius of Byron was eccentric and glaring, like the comet. That of Cowper was regular, rich, glowing with a benignant light, and obedient to a high and holy law. Was there not a fundamental influence at the basis of the moral being of each of these poets? Under what impulses did they start in life? Ah! they had different *mothers*. The one calm, affectionate, devoted to her child; and dedicating him to God; the other proud, imperious, passionate, and prayerless; the one blessing her William; the other cursing her George Gordon. And thus was the child “father to the man.”

Never did Byron write thus with the image of his mother before him—

“Thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me.”

But Cowper loved to dwell on the memory of her who bore him, nursed him, dressed him “in scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,” as he tells us; paid her “nightly visits” to his chamber, gave him his “morning bounties,” fitted him off for school, bestowing the “fragrant waters” on his little cheeks with her own dear hands, till “fresh they shone and glowed”—all these little acts, suggested by maternal tenderness, endeared his mother to him.

“And this, still legible in memory’s page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honors to thee as my numbers may.”

But Byron, destitute of domestic associations, stalked abroad ‘among pirates, infidels, libertines, and all lawless beings, until the very influences of such a communion reacted on his imagination with baleful energy, imparting to it a kind of deadly inspiration, as fatal to the peace and health of his own soul, as it was destructive to others. A noble mind he had, a fertile fancy, lofty powers of conception, a graceful yet vigorous versification, a diction of easy and natural strength, glowing at times with the fiery “impress of a burning sensibility;” at other times darkened all over with the gloom of a comfortless skepticism, reminding us of a beautiful stream winding its way through a channel

overhung by shapeless rocks and intertangled branches of trees that shut out the light of the sun, and cast their somber shadows into the depths beneath. Byron seems to have gloried in his misanthropic views of man, the more painfully oppressive, because drawn by so masterly a pencil. Cowper rejoiced in philanthropic views; the more delightful because they were the natural effusion of a benevolent mind, refined and exalted by communion with God and all holy truth. The one could write in the sincerity of his soul, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still." The other, with equal sincerity, "England, with all thy fame, I hate thee still." "I love a good hater," said the proud cynic among poets, and this was the sum of the second table of *his* decalogue. The first—what was it? Who shall write the answer? To his vision, as he looked upon the ocean, and in the spirit of apostrophe said—

"Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself *in tempests*"—

images of terror arose, not to awe and subdue the soul into a trembling humility, but to serve as mere responses to the grandeur of his own imagination. The image of eternity awakened in him no wholesome thoughts of that dread retribution which awaits the moral agency of man, and especially that man on whom the splendid endowments of creative genius were conferred with so liberal a hand.

Byron wrote chiefly to gratify himself; Cowper to gratify others. Through the principal works of the former there is a perpetual impersonation of himself,

whoever be the character, whether Childe Harold, Conrad, Manfred, or Don Juan, and whatever the plan or the train of events. Through those of the latter we perceive a continually *objective* strain, in which the forms of truth, beauty, goodness, and all kindred things are pictured for their own sake, or in their connection with the spirit of humanity, their coincidence with nature, or their subservience to the glory of God. Not even that deep and despairing melancholy, which brooded over the mind of Cowper, could alienate his unfaltering trust in God, or dim the luster of his cheerful page. How different from this the gloomy, scornful imaginings of the coroneted bard! What violence must he have done to his own exquisite sense of beauty! Charity sat sweetly on the timid brow of the one. Defiance gleamed incessantly from that of the other. There was kindness even in the severity of Cowper. There was severity in the gentleness of Byron. The one lived to smile; the other to sneer. The former was a model of purity; the latter a pattern of uncleanness. Cowper died in the calm faith of the Gospel; Byron—but let us drop the mantle of silence over the doom of the troubled spirit, that is sealed up to its eternal destiny!

XXXV.

William Wirt.

THAT mysterious thing called GENIUS is less susceptible of an exact definition in abstract terms, than of illustration by an appeal to exemplifying, living models. By *living*, I mean not alone those who are contemporaneous with us, but those who live after they are dead; minds of such ethereal mold as bid defiance to the despotism of mortality, and become imperishable amid a thousand names and things that perish around them.

Describe genius as we may, whether as enthroned in a comprehensive intellect, a creative imagination, or a sovereign and decisive will, it must finally be authenticated by an *a posteriori* contemplation, and fully settled by the judgment of posterity. In vain did Columbus long knock at the palaces of kings; in vain did Milton court the Muses; his immortal work could command only a few pounds. In vain did Byron wake the music of his youthful harp to "Hours of Idleness." The judicial critic pronounced sentence of condemnation upon him, not in sorrow or tenderness, but with a bitter derision, that instantly woke all the powers of his mind, all its firm resolve, its fierce retaliation, and daring, unconquerable energy. Goldsmith was neglected by others, and despaired of himself, until Johnson put courage

into his heart by assuming the responsibility of selling for him his "Vicar of Wakefield." Some of the most eloquent of the world's statesmen and orators are said to have failed in their first attempts, while many men of brilliant, but premature promise, have sunk into obscurity, leaving no

"name

To fill the speaking trump of Fame."

To the verdict of time, then, must be committed the merits of the truly great, and these posterity will "not willingly let die." There is a law of human estimation which will eventually secure, not only to the man of exemplary virtue, but to the man of exalted genius, his rightful reward.

WILLIAM WIRT is an honored name in the as yet infant history of our country, not so much from any variety of official station having fallen to his lot, as in the case of John Quincy Adams, to say nothing of other men of kindred eminence; not because he attained to a supreme elevation of official station, but because of the eminent inherent qualities of the man, and the extraordinary development of those qualities in the sphere in which he actually moved. That sphere was the law, and within it he shone as a star of the first magnitude. It is chiefly as an advocate in the courts of law, though occasionally an author, that Mr. Wirt is known to the people of the United States, and even to those of other lands. To the noble science of law he devoted himself with an assiduity, and even an enthusiasm, indicative at once of an exalted intellect, and a passionate love of those forms of truth which are interwoven with the

individual rights and social relations of man. In the walks of jurisprudence he found fit aliment for his genius, whether it was called into exercise in Courts of *Nisi Prius*, or engaged in pure legal argumentation.

Maryland gave him birth, though Virginia adopted him, and claims, like Massachusetts for her Webster, the *prestige* of his brilliant name. He was a native of Bladensburg: his origin was humble, and his history presents a fine illustration of the excellence and efficacy of our republican institutions in evoking the talents and the intellectual energies, that afterward became enlisted in her service.

The wisdom of Providence is capable of devising an indefinite variety of modes of moral discipline, so necessary to man in his present state of existence. One of these is the toil and struggle of youthful years, which, burdensome and bitter as they often are, have in them a blessing, that diffuses its unexhausted influence through all the subsequent period of life. They not only strengthen the sinews of our moral being, but teach us to moderate the ardor of our expectations from the world, and especially to guard ourselves from the illusions of a too sanguine fancy. Those visions of castellated beauty that enchanted the ardent eye of youth, as it gazed upward toward the clouds, instead of looking for realities within reasonable limits, soon melt away as we advance in the journey of life. And we learn to rely less on the promises of men than on our own patient efforts, if we can but be sustained by a secret divine aid, pledged, indeed, to all men of a diligent spirit.

In the structure of Mr. Wirt's mind, the imagination was prominent. The "vision and the faculty divine" was conferred on him in no stinted measure, insomuch that the early portion of his life might be called poetic, as well as romantic. What he then needed to study was the science of mathematics, or at least of moral truth in its most rigid forms of demonstration. But he was captivated with the charms of classic fable, and expatiated with congenial delight through the fields of heathen mythology. Then came the discipline of the *school*, that is, of school-teaching, for, like many other great men, he served that sort of apprenticeship; and as a schoolmaster must learn, if he would teach, so he may be presumed to have learned some useful things in that unpoetic, practical sphere. And here began his study of the law, a more serious enterprise than any he had yet undertaken. One can hardly help lamenting that so fine a mind had not, at that critical and pregnant period, been trained under such influences as auspicated the youthful powers of Story; that its native sterling attributes had not then been invigorated and harmonized by a judicious and liberal education, such as they deserved. And yet these very disadvantages augment our wonder at the splendid intellectual triumph which he eventually achieved. If there be any propriety in using the term *self-made*, it would well apply to Wirt, for whatever wisdom dwelt in his teachers, he became wiser than them all. To the walls of a college he was a stranger. He was smitten with the love of mental progress, and was destined to illustrate it in his own person. Poverty was a blessing to him. It might be called his good genius watching over his inexperienced

youth, and impelling him to wholesome exertion ; not an evil spirit perpetually repressing his nascent energies.

It is no dishonor to his great name that when he had finished his preparatory legal studies, and selected the field of his practice, he was obliged to be indebted to a friend for the means of reaching that field. But, once in the field, he could say, "My mind to me a kingdom is." The time was to come when a single argument at the bar produced him what to some would be a little fortune. He then practiced in Fauquier county, Virginia, the region of the birth-place of Marshall, *clarum-que venerabile nomen*, and about that time took the tour which preceded the publication of the *British Spy*, one of those assumed appellations, for which Wirt seems to have had an habitual partiality ; for though early married, he published a series of papers somewhat after the Addisonian manner, on which he bestowed the title of "The Old Bachelor," and which, if not always so racy and brilliant as the *British Spy*, bear the stamp of his elegant genius.

The State of Virginia abounds in scenery of the most romantic character, such as "Shenstone might have envied," and Wordsworth might be tempted to worship, as when he says :

"Therefore am I still

A lover of the meadows, and the woods
And mountains, and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive. * * *
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her !"

It is something more than English scenery, and requires the exercise of a bolder imagination than ever hovered around the beauties of Windermere, or delighted in the placid repose of the Cam or the Isis. The elements of beauty may present a perfect development amid the sea-girt isle, but for those of grandeur in all its plenitude, the poet must come and look on American scenery. Lofty mountains, spacious and exuberant valleys, giant lakes, splendid waterfalls, enormous precipices, unfathomed subterranean structures, and even sublime imitations of human art itself,* if that be possible to nature, abound in this last discovered quarter of the globe, this last gift of God to the wandering race of men, and most of these in the primitive, immense State of Virginia. Through her beautiful groves and vales the youthful Wirt wandered like "the pilgrim in the shadow of the Jungfrau." From the summit of her mountains he beheld with rapture the glory of that far-reaching prospect; he heard with astonishment the sound of her waterfalls, and his imagination kindled with the inspiration of the scene. This was the period of the composition of the *British Spy*, and it was while under this excitement of the imagination, that he drew those striking pictures, especially that one of the "Blind Preacher," which has attained such celebrity. Indeed, it seems to have become a standard passage in the English language. The verisimilitude of the painting has, I believe, been duly authenticated. The beauty of the coloring was never doubted. And yet neither in this, his earliest work, nor in his *Old Bachelor*, which succeeded it, do we find so much of the picturesque,

* The Natural Bridge.

and even the gorgeous, as in that production of his sober and mature years, the *Life of Patrick Henry*.

But on the character of that racy, salient, original genius, that burning patriot, whose words came forth like the imprisoned thunder, scorching and blasting every thing on which they fell, Wirt could never speak but with unbounded enthusiasm.

His delineations of character in the *Spy*, for instance that of Marshall and of Monroe, are eminently felicitous. What was prophetic in them has been fulfilled. Monroe, distinguished for his judgment of men, selected him for the office of Attorney-General of the United States, in which President Adams with equal judgment continued him. Marshall always looked pleased when Wirt was "ascending to the height of some great argument" before him, though sometimes he was obliged to give judgment against him.

As talent naturally tends to a conspicuous center, it was not long before Mr. Wirt was drawn to Richmond, the metropolis of the State, where his practice accumulated, and whence his fame extended. Visiting a friend who occupies the same house in which Wirt lived while a resident in Richmond, I have often sat down in the little office he occupied in the rear of the house, and imagined the workings of his active and accomplished mind on that spot, where genius had impressed a beautiful charm.

There was one dark period in this portion of his life, when the appetites of his inferior nature gained the ascendancy over the better principles for which he ever had a profound respect, and to the practice of which he returned with a steadiness of purpose, and an energy of

will, which constituted a part of the greatness of his mind. All the man awoke within him to spurn the base indulgences of the animal nature. He dashed the Circean cup from his lips, and escaped the sting of the deadly adder that lay coiled at the bottom. The desolator of health, talent, genius, youth, beauty, and promise missed his prey, and WIRT was yet destined to devote many honorable years to his own fame, and to the service of the country he loved. *O si sic omnes*—but Charity, reluctant to “draw the frailties” of the great from their “dread abode,” prefers to throw her soft mantle over the portals of the tomb, and teach the only forgetfulness that can honor the dead or console the living. The sense of propriety, of duty, of virtue, continued to gather strength in the mind of Wirt, until with his constitutional ardor tempered by a graceful humility, he embraced Christianity, and laid at her feet the treasures of that exalted mind. This was, indeed, late in life, but it was the expression of the accumulated testimony of that life; of the faith of one long accustomed to study premises, to weigh evidence, to expect demonstration, and to rest only in well-established conclusions.

I have said that the principal sphere in which Mr. Wirt moved was that of the Courts. By the Legislature of Virginia he was offered a seat in the Senate of the United States, which he declined. He would have honored the State, which thus sought to honor him, for the character of his eloquence and the extent of his attainments, joined to the habitual dignity and suavity of his deportment, admirably qualified him for that sphere; but he preferred not to leave the walks of juris-

prudence, and as he there concentrated his efforts, there he gathered the enduring laurels which encircle his name. What Cicero says of a distinguished orator, might justly be applied to Wirt: "In oratione sapientis hominis et recti, gravitas summa et naturalis quædam inerat auctoritas, non et causam, sed ut testimonium dicere putares." "In the oratory of this wise and upright man there appeared the utmost dignity, and a certain natural imposing authority, which might lead you to suppose he was not so much advocating a cause as delivering testimony."

Nature had formed his person in an imperial mold, and stamped on his countenance the lineaments of a serene, yet penetrating mind. While its well-proportioned amplitude mirrored forth that rich and beautiful imagination that dwelt within, it faithfully reflected, too, the broad and comprehensive intellect, which proved itself equal to every subject and every argument it attempted. Distinguished for good sense, and a correct appreciation of the position in which he happened to be placed, Mr. Wirt indulged in no flights of fancy before the Supreme Bench of the United States, but constructed and compacted his argument with a strictness and severity of thought and reasoning that proved not only his consummate forensic skill, but his indefatigable preparation. Among those efforts which the writer witnessed, he well remembers his defense of Judge Peck, in the case of impeachment before the Senate of the United States, some twenty years since. On that occasion were arrayed against him what might be called a Committee of the *élite* of the House, embracing the names of Ambrose Spencer, Storrs, Buchanan, Mc-

Duffie; with whom he nobly contended single-handed, and brought his client off victorious. It was pronounced by all a masterly defense, as it was certainly one that tasked all the resources even of his fertile mind. But he was a man capable of rising to the height of any occasion, however august, and of sustaining an equal career with any of his compeers.

For a specimen of jury pleading, where impressive elocution and impassioned appeal befitted the occasion, I might refer to the celebrated trial of Aaron Burr, in which he was counsel for Blennerhasset; but what child is not familiar with that brilliant oration? Curran never surpassed it.

To the beauty of an almost faultless diction he added the graces of a fine elocution. Fluent, but not feeble; earnest, but not declamatory; amplifying, but never wiredrawing, he carried the minds of the court or jury along with him in such style as to make it rather a pleasure than a burden to hear him. Even the tones of his voice were rich with various music, its full cadences lingering delightfully on the ear, while the benignity and sincerity of his countenance, aided by the striking expression of his dark and animated eye, completed the effect of his oratory on his captive auditors. At the conclusion of one of his touching perorations (for there was a vein of deep tenderness in his composition), I have seen the unwonted tears trembling in the eyes even of the judges, and Marshall himself endeavoring to suppress the emotion awakened by the irresistible eloquence of the accomplished advocate.

But that voice will no more be heard among men. The seal of death is upon it, and that manly form is

embraced in the passionless repose of the grave. But "being dead, he yet speaketh." The close of his life was cloudless and serene. The spirit of affliction had passed through his soul, but though, like the angel of Bethesda, it troubled the waters, there was a healing power in it, of which he tenderly speaks in a letter to Rev. Dr. Rice, then himself on the borders of the promised land. A lovely daughter, the youngest of the family circle, was taken from him. "Although," says he, "we have suffered all the anguish that parents can feel under such a bereavement, we have learned to bless and thank our God for his mercy to her and to us, in removing her from the storms and dangers of this wicked world, and transplanting our tender flower into his own garden, and cutting the strongest cord that bound us to earth. We have seen her almost visibly ascend to heaven before us, and now feel that we have nothing to do but to prepare with all our might, under the assistance of our God and Saviour, to follow her.

* * * God called me in my youth, and I heard him for a season, but the infidels of Georgia were permitted to prevail over his Spirit, and to ridicule me out of my religion. My Heavenly Father might then have justly forsaken me, but he never did. On the contrary, his Spirit has always been striving with me, and maintaining a powerful, and at length a victorious contest, I trust, with the world."

Such is the testimony of one of the most splendid minds of our country to the value and necessity of religion; to the fact of the secret operations of the Spirit of God on a heart masked from the inspection of the world, but belying the infidelity that maintained its

temporary venomous ascendancy on his lips. He never sought the refuge of a bad principle but in the hour of temptation and indulgence, and then with a trembling heart and an accusing conscience.

Time and grace have triumphed over all adverse things, and set the star of beauty in his immortal crown.

XXXVI.

Elizabeth Bunyan.*

It was in the month of August, 1661, at the Midsummer Assizes in that part of England which included in its jurisdiction the town of Bedford, celebrated as the birthplace of John Bunyan, that a woman appeared in the Swan-chamber, where the two judges, and many justices and gentry of the country, sat in company. She was neatly though poorly attired in the peculiar costume of the day. Her step was slow and somewhat timid, as if she feared to do any thing inconsistent with the delicacy of her sex, and upon a naturally serene and serious brow there seemed to press an additional weight, as of some extraordinary sorrow, which had hitherto in vain sought relief from any earthly source. Those, indeed, were times of severe and wasting trial to men who had any regard to their own consciences, any respect for the dignity of human nature, or the inviolability of human rights, or any sense of the value of liberty regulated by just and beneficent law. All

* Founded on one of the chapters in Philip's Life of Bunyan.

those formidable difficulties that oppressed and obstructed the progress of society and of liberal opinions, arose out of the union of the crown and the crozier, the throne of power with the spiritual chair. Such a contradiction to the first principles of the founder of Christianity, who declared that "his kingdom was not of this world," necessarily led to convulsions in Church and State, which rent the very foundation of society, and produced scenes at which humanity might blush, and over which the spirit of mercy might weep, as if in despair for the triumph of truth, justice, and freedom. It might be called the Procrustean age, when men were fastened to iron beds, and stretched or shortened according to the fancy of tyrants and bigots.

Among the sufferers for conscience' sake was John Bunyan, the immortal Pilgrim, who was thrust into Bedford Jail, and kept there twelve years, that he might learn better manners than to speak his own mind, or use any liberty of teaching the ignorant and the wicked out of that Bible which God has given to *man*. Rampant power, under pretext of law and justice, paid no respect to the tenderness of domestic ties, as it was incapable of appreciating the beauty of the domestic virtues. It was the reign of Charles II., when purity was denounced as prudery, virtue laughed to scorn, and vice courted, honored, and even enthroned; when "truth had fallen in the street, and equity could not enter" the dwellings of men.

John Bunyan had been torn from his wife and four children, who were dependent for subsistence on his daily labor, and one of whom was blind, and of course the object of peculiar attention and parental sympathy.

That little blind daughter frequently shared his imprisonment with him, and listened with child-like interest to the "tales of a father," in which he pointed out the Christian pilgrim's way to heaven.

He that has never looked upon the interview of a tender-hearted wife with her husband in prison, has yet to behold one of the most affecting phases of humanity. Guilty or innocent, he becomes the object of an extraordinary affection, which seeks to shield guilt, or vindicate innocence. Stern law itself seems delicately to recognize this feeling in woman, when it refuses to question *her* about the criminality of the husband, and requires no testimony from either against the other. How could Elizabeth Bunyan sleep on her bereaved pillow, when her innocent husband—and that husband a servant of the Most High God—was languishing in a jail? She had never heard of Pliny's Hispulla, Cicero's Terentia, of Lady Russell, or of Helen Walker, who was to be the heroine of an immortal page under the name of Jeanie Deans. She had no idea of playing the heroine when she entered the judicial chamber, but, prompted by woman's undying affection, resolved to do all in her power to obtain the release of her husband.

Sir Matthew Hale was on the bench, supported by other judges less merciful and tender in their deportment.

"My lord," said Elizabeth, with a tremulous accent that bespoke her heart's deep emotion, "I make bold to come once again to your lordship, to know what may be done with my husband."

Sir Matthew replied that it was out of his power to

help her, because, said he, "they have taken that for a conviction which thy husband spoke at the sessions; and unless there be something done to *undo* that, I can do thee no good."

"My lord," replied the wife of Bunyan, her spirit rising to the height of its conscious dignity, while it maintained its respect for the majesty of the presence in which she stood, "My lord, he is kept unlawfully in prison; they clapped him up before there were any proclamations against the meetings; the indictment also is false; besides, they never asked him whether he was guilty or no; neither did he confess the indictment," and as she concluded the sentence, a flush of virtuous indignation mantled her pale cheek. As Elizabeth was about to resume her remonstrance, one of the justices interposed sternly:

"My lord, he was lawfully convicted."

"It is false," retorted the woman, stung with a sense of the injury done to herself and her husband; "for, when they said to him, do you confess the indictment, he said only this, that he had been to several meetings, both where there were preaching the word and prayer, and that they had God's presence among them."

Her pious and trusting heart could not conceive how impious men, under color of law, could interfere with the high sanction of divine authority, and question the broad seal of Heaven, so visibly stamped on the commission of him, whose conversion was itself almost a miracle. Not so did Twisdon, a misbelieving member of that court, regard the tinker of Elstowe; nor was he a man to be moved from his purpose by the pratings of an ignorant woman, as he doubtless esteemed her,

who presumed to argue matters so much beyond her reach.

"What!" he said, angrily, "you think we can do what we list; your husband is a breaker of the peace, and is convicted by the law."

"But," interrupted the ready advocate, in a firm and determined tone of voice, indicating a deep conviction of the righteousness of her cause, "my lord, he was not lawfully convicted—"

"He *was* lawfully convicted," retorted Justice Chester, as if he would be behind none of his associates in inflexibility of opinion. A shade of disapprobation passed over the brow of Elizabeth Bunyan, while she begged leave to deny the truth of the assertion thus positively made. Hope still struggled against the extremity of her case, while she maintained "it was but a word of discourse that they took for a conviction," and bursting into tears, she wept with a profuseness that seemed to give relief to her surcharged heart. There was mute eloquence in those tears! The judges sat in silence, as if, after all, it were more becoming to suffer a sentiment of heaven-born pity to diffuse its tender influence through their bosoms, than to persist in bringing all the severity of the law to bear on its humble, helpless victims, offenders though they held them to be, especially the man who now lay the inmate of a comfortless jail.

At length Chester broke the silence, and in such terms as too clearly indicated that if the law of sympathy had obtained its natural ascendancy, it was only for a moment, while the permanent feeling was that of inexorable justice, impervious even to woman's tears.

"It is recorded, woman; it is recorded," exclaimed Chester.

And this seemed to be the length and breadth of his argument. The ingenuity of a benevolent heart would have found reasons for protecting the weak against the strong, while it indulged the luxury of gratifying the desires of one whose devotion was so sincere and ardent. But those were no times for the exercise of the gentler virtues, and the genius of the age seemed dissatisfied, until it had elevated to the bench, and invested with the ermine, that incarnation of brutality—Jeffries. The fiery Bonner expressed the real spirit of those in power toward those who dared to cherish liberty of opinion: "You will never mend till more of you burn." Such was the efficacy of fire to convince and persuade men to be of the right opinion!

To the vociferation of Chester that "it was recorded," Elizabeth replied, in a calm and decisive manner, that she had been at London to obtain her husband's liberty; had delivered a petition to Lord Barkwood, and others of the House of Lords, to that effect, all of whom said *they* had no power to set him at large, but committed his releasement to the judges, at the next Assizes. "And now," she added, "I am come to appeal to you, whose great duty it is to temper justice with mercy, to deliver the oppressed, and, as our Holy Scriptures say, to 'give liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to judge the fatherless, plead for the widow, and avenge us of our adversaries,' lest the cry of the injured come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and he come down in wrath against you and against this nation, that has

drunk the blood of the saints. Hath he not said, that when he shall whet his glittering sword, and his hand take hold on judgment, he will render vengeance to his adversaries, and reward them that hate him? That *he* shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy? I appeal, then, to your lordships, whose only hope of pardon and salvation is in the mercy of God, that ye judge and avenge me this day, as one whom ye are shortly to meet at that tribunal where you and all the judges of the earth are to be tried for the life eternal."

As she uttered these words in an earnest and piercing voice, they sounded through the court like the prophetic tones of one who had indeed spoken in the name of Him whose words cannot fall to the ground.

And those ministers of the law, if not convinced, were for a time silenced. The historian tells us, "they made as if they heard her not," while Chester reiterated his old song, "it is recorded, it is recorded;" a record which, written by bigotry, charity would fain have blotted out with her tears.

"If it be recorded," said Elizabeth, "the record is *false*! And woe unto them who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, falsehood for truth and truth for falsehood. They shall have their reward."

"My lord," said Chester, endeavoring to forget the heroic suppliant that stood before him, "this Bunyan is a pestilent fellow, a man that deals in dreams and visions; a blasphemer, who pretends to have seen the devil and wrestled with him; who thinks himself a John Baptist, and has set up for a reformer, whereas

he is only a tinker, and has left tinkering for preaching. There is not such a fellow in the country again. But we will cure him of his diseases. We want no soul-tinkering in the land. Men may think as they list, but let them keep to their trades, neither be too free of their thoughts. He is convicted, and it is recorded."

Wherenpon Twisdon, as if desiring to re-enforce these hard words, and rob the lone woman of all hope, asks her: "Will your husband now leave preaching, and conform to the laws of the realm? Wist ye not we have power to grind him to the dust? If he will leave preaching, then bring him hither."

"My lord, ye may grind *him* to the dust, but ye cannot grind the truth he holds and delivers. You may scatter his ashes to the four winds of heaven, but they will be like the seed that flieth all abroad, and, taking root, bringeth forth a thousand-fold. He cannot, he *dareth* not leave preaching, and though you bind him, 'the word of God is not bound,' as testify the Scriptures themselves. Therefore loose him, and let him go his way."

The patience of the judges seemed now to be fast waning, for they began to feel there was nothing harder to contend with than the roused spirit of injured woman, nothing more obnoxious than official intrusion upon the rights of conscience and the sanctities of domestic life.

"See here," said Twisdon, "what should we talk any more about such a fellow? Must he do what *he* lists? He is a breaker of the peace, and should be broken of his wickedness."

There was one subject which the wife of Bunyan had not yet touched, in the hope that a sense of justice would lead the court to grant her request, without too minutely spreading before them the painful necessities of that little family over which, in the midst of all her affliction, she never failed to extend the shield of a mother's love. Hitherto she had withheld the mention of this, in the expectation that her simple arguments would prevail with men whose business it was to do justly, as well as to love mercy. But that expectation failing, she again addressed the court, while the sadness of her countenance too truly reflected the sorrow of her heart.

"Can I need to assure you, my lord, that my husband desireth to live peaceably with all men, and to follow his calling, that he may maintain his family? Moreover, I have *four small children*, that cannot help themselves, one of which is *blind*, so we have nothing to live upon but the charity of good people."

Such was the state of poor Bunyan's family, while the court of Charles II. was reveling in vice, luxury, and all manner of debauchery. And there sat his ministers to pronounce judgment against men for exercising that freedom which is derived by charter directly from God himself, and to abridge which is to invade the prerogative of God.

Justice Hale indeed seemed touched with pity at the mention of her children, and exclaimed, "Alas, poor woman!"

Twisdon, however, the network of whose heart seems to have been constructed of steel, and to have been as destitute of sensibility as a stratified rock, accused Mrs.

Bunyan of using poverty as a cloak, and declared that she was better maintained by her husband's running up and down, preaching, than by following his calling for a living.

"What is his calling?" asked Sir Matthew.

"A tinker, my lord," was the answer of some one present.

"Yes," added Elizabeth, "and because he is a tinker, and a poor man, therefore he is despised, and cannot have justice. But there is one tribunal, whereof the Judge will not regard the persons of men, but judge righteous judgment. We shall all meet there!"

Meanwhile, Sir Matthew Hale, who had naturally a warm and tender heart, had been suppressing its rising emotions; for though he sat as a judge, he felt as a husband and a father; and brushing away an unbidden tear, and addressing the petitioner in a tone of kindness, said: "Seeing it is so, that they have taken what thy husband spake for a conviction, I recommend thou apply thyself to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error." And the judge looked intently on the object of his address.

"A writ of error, my lord!" exclaimed Chester, who was offended with the whole strain of kindly advice given by Hale, and especially with the last clause of it—"A writ of error to the behoof of such a fellow as this! He will preach, and do what he lists."

"*He preacheth nothing but the word of God,*" rejoined Elizabeth, with much emphasis, encouraged as she was by the chief justice.

"*He preach the word of God!*" angrily cried Twisdon, with a violence of gesture as if he would have

struck the defenseless woman before him ; “ he runneth up and down, a busy-body in other men’s matters, a wolf in sheep’s clothing, a disturber of the peace, and a reprobate.”

“ No, my lord, God hath owned the labors of my husband, and through him converted many souls from the error of their ways, who will be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day when He shall make up his jewels.” And she spoke as if animated with a sweet confidence in the truth of what she said, and as if, under the consciousness of that inspiring truth, she could bow with resignation even to the rudeness of a Chester or a Twisdon.

“ God own John Bunyan, do you say, woman !” clamored Twisdon : “ his is a doctrine of the devil !” And he uttered it with a hearty malice and spitefulness which Satan himself might have envied.

“ My lord,” replied Elizabeth, with a tranquil firmness that contrasted strongly with the violence of her judicial browbeater, “ when the righteous Judge shall appear to uncover the secrets of men’s hearts, and to judge, not according to appearances, but with *righteous* judgment, it will then be seen that his doctrine is not of the devil, but the doctrine of truth and righteousness.” And such a double emphasis did she place on the word *righteous*, as to satisfy all there was a striking contrast drawn in her own mind between the transactions of the present and the future.

“ Send her away, send her away,” reiterated Twisdon, to the chief justice. “ Wist ye not that this woman ought not further to trouble us with her presence and pertinaciousness ?”

"It grieveth me, woman," said Sir Matthew, whose thoughts seemed absorbed in the condition of the unfriended female before him, "that I can do thee no good. Thou must do one of those three things afore-said, to wit, either apply thyself to the king, or sue out the pardon of thy husband, or else get a writ of error; but a writ of error will be thy best resort. Many are they who have thus been holpen out of their trouble."

Under this final decision of the court, the devoted wife of Bunyan retired, thankful to God that he had lifted from her soul a weight of fear with which she had entered that chamber, and inspired a poor, weak woman with unwonted courage to bear her testimony before the great ones of the earth, yet filled with sorrow, not merely for her unavailing efforts to obtain the enlargement of her husband, but for the prospective doom of those who had lent themselves as the instruments of oppression and cruelty against an innocent man. "I could not but break forth into tears," she said, in simple and artless language, "not so much because they were so hard-hearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures will have to give at the coming of the Lord, when they shall there answer for whatsoever things they have done in the body, whether they be good or bad."

The seal of death has long since been placed on all the actors in these scenes, and while the sepulcher holds their dust, their conscious spirits, invested with the responsibilities of an immortal existence, await the equal and exact retributions of the appointed day, "for which all other days were made." For twelve long

years did John Bunyan lie in the prison of Bedford, a living martyr to the liberty of conscience and the freedom of speech. Those sad prison hours were often shared with him by his little blind daughter, who, like a ministering angel, tendered to him the sweet sympathy of her undying affections, while in return he bestowed on his child those paternal caresses, which were rendered more precious and sacred by their endurance of a common affliction. Occasionally he enjoyed the additional melancholy solace of a visit from his destitute, but still devoted wife, and distressed children, whom the grave still spared, only to be the pining victims of want, when they were not the pitied objects of charity. And all this bitter suffering was earned as the result of "teaching plain country people the knowledge of the Scriptures, and the practice of virtue!"

That was the "head and front of his offending." It has been said that "it requires the energy of Fox, the eloquence of Burke, and the pathos of Sheridan, to paint the effect of that prison scene on the feelings of humanity." What qualities in man, then, were required to endure—to *be* the original of—a scene so difficult to be painted? The spirit of humanity has enjoined upon us,

"Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that lives."

How often, alas! in the history of mankind, has this noble canon of heavenly charity been violated! And how deeply is her spirit grieved, when the hand of power, seizing the weapons of persecution, wields them with bigot fury against the very image of God! "Man's

inhumanity to man," we had almost said, is the history of man. If Burns, in the bitterness of personal experience, gave utterance to that broad sentiment, which casts such a stain on our race, what reason had Bunyan to give it a wider scope and a swifter wing! Yet he was cheerful in sorrow, and triumphant in affliction. A lambent light from Heaven softened the gloom of his dungeon, and voices sweet as the music of angels whispered peace to his soul. His very dreams were of the heavenly world; and oh, that DREAM which had its birth, like a thing of inspiration, as he lay on his enchanted pillow, hard though it was, unsmoothed by the hand of domestic love! "As I walked through the wilderness of this world," is the opening language of his immortal Pilgrim's Progress, "I lighted on a certain place where there was a den [his jail], and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I *dreamed a dream*." How many have been charmed into a new, celestial life by that dream, which, under the form of the ideal, presents a splendid image of the real, the true, and the perpetual; a work that comes home to the "business and bosoms of men;" the charm of childhood, and the solace of age; the companion of our solitary, and the theme of our social hours; the illuminated chart of the Christian voyager over the sea of life, which he may consult in the darkest night; the beautiful synopsis of Christian doctrine; the profound analysis of Christian experience; a work in which truth glows under the veil of fiction, and fiction scarcely augments the beauty of truth; where the graces of Christianity are set forth as by the hand of a master, and the prospects of heaven are painted as with the pencil

of one who had "looked within the veil," and seen and heard unutterable things. So the muse of Cowper :

"Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail ;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile ;
Witty and well employed, and like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word !"

The world has accepted this book, and holds it as a cherished gift. It has stamped the seal of immortality upon it, and will hand it down to the latest posterity. The tinker of Elstowe has become the teacher of mankind, and while the names of his narrow-minded, bigoted persecutors are moldering in oblivion, his own is inscribed on that loftiest column in the temple of sacred fame, around which is wreathed in grace and beauty the amaranth—the symbol of the unfading and the imperishable.

XXXVII.

John Summerfield.

TO NAME this youth—whose grave is with us—whose spirit, not so much *departed* as *disembodied*, seems to hover near us, is to awaken in many bosoms sentiments of the strongest enthusiasm. That memory with which the Creator has endowed us is indeed a wonderful faculty. It may be called the mind's sculptor, as the imagination is its painter. How in its deep and invisible recesses it chisels the mind's thoughts, fancies, reasonings, and even sentiments and passions! How it secures beyond the reach of time and the ravages of death, the form, the face, the very features of those we love! In solitude it enables us to think of them at pleasure; in society to honor their names with a tender tribute; in our very dreams to recall the image, that cannot fade from the canvas of the mind. This is one of the *compensations* granted us for the inevitable sorrows of our mortal state. Not only does hope beckon us onward to a better land, but memory refreshes us with exhilarating views of the past, and even its shadows and sorrows seem mellowed in the distance as we look back upon them from some advanced point of our pathway. "Sorrow touched by thee grows bright" is not a line of mere fancy's creation. It is a sketch from nature. Living forms abide but a brief period with us. How many of our friends are numbered with the dead!

If we attempt to count them, the swelling catalogue surprises us.

Twenty-six years ago there was one among us, a public man, a minister of Christ, who captivated all hearts. A foreigner by birth, of humble origin, he sojourned but a short time among us, yet created an interest which has maintained an undiminished energy to the present period. The early death of highly gifted and promising men is often called *mysterious*. But what is a *mystery*? Something which cannot be explained to the human understanding. If our understandings were sufficiently capacious and our knowledge sufficiently extensive to comprehend the things of the invisible world, all these things might be cleared up. Why Kirke White was stricken down at twenty-nine, Brainerd at thirty, Larned at twenty-four, and Spencer at about the same age, is not for us to decide.

When Summerfield was informed by his physician that he could not long survive, "Oh," said he, lifting his hands, "*Oh, that I might live to the age of Jesus Christ; nevertheless, 'not my will, but thine be done.'*"

He lived, however, sufficiently long to produce a powerful and wide-spread impression on the public mind in England and America. That impression, durable as it is, is not the result of any published sermons. It is not the eloquence of the printed page, but the living orator, that has held the recollection of the many who heard him as in a kind of enchantment for so long a time.

The poet Montgomery, in speaking of the subject of this sketch, said:

"Every attempt to present on paper the splendid

effects of impassioned eloquence is like gathering up dew-drops, which appear jewels and pearls on the grass, but run to water in the hands ; the essence and the elements remain, but the grace, the sparkle, and form are gone."

Said like a poet ! There are some things that can neither be painted nor printed. The variable expression of the living eye, that wonderful organ of divine creation ; the changing lights and shades of the human countenance, through which the soul of thought communicates itself with electric energy ; the music of a voice whose various intonations alternately soothe or sadden, elevate or depress, agitate or tranquilize the hearer ; the diversified movements of the frame, denominated by the Athenian orator, *action, action, action* ; and by Quintilian, *eloquentia corporis*, so expressive of the inward workings of the mind ; these are the indescribable, as they are the untransferable attributes of genius. He that can seize the colors of the rainbow, or write down the "music of the spheres," may catch and communicate the ethereal and spiritual of eloquence. I shall not be accused of using improper language when I say that the eloquence of the pulpit is a sacred art ; for as all art is founded in science, this has its foundation in the most sublime of all sciences, that of theology. The principles of mathematical science and of natural philosophy serve as a foundation on which the useful superstructure of certain arts is erected. The practical results of these principles are diffused throughout society for its benefit. The principles of moral philosophy also conduce to their appropriate system of practice. The practice of sacred elo-

quence must also flow from pre-established principles. And since these principles transcend in weight and value those of every other art, it follows that they deserve our careful attention, and should command our profound reverence.

What, then, is eloquence? The art of speaking well. What is sacred eloquence? The art of speaking well on sacred subjects. Definitions more diffuse and exegetical might be given, but this one may answer all practical purposes, if it do not comprehend all that is true in relation to the subject. Speaking audibly is not essential to real eloquence. It may exist in the imagination of the poet, while his eye is "in a fine frenzy rolling," and in the recesses of his own glowing soul he may survey with wonder and delight the various splendid images, which by the mysterious energy of genius have started into life. It may silently charm the unconscious eye, which, intensely fixed, drinks in the beauties which, emanating from some master mind, have passed from the pencil to the canvas. It may speed itself to the heart in a single look from the "human face divine," as was emphatically true when the illustrious Saviour looked upon his faithful and fallen Peter, melting him by one irresistible glance to a weeping child; as is seen in the imploring look of suffering infancy; in the aspect of injured innocence, or, in fine, in the sublime expression which the excited soul of a truly great and virtuous man throws into his features.

This was a part of the eloquence of Summerfield. In the day of his strength, that well-remembered countenance did at times (I speak with reverent allusion,) appear as if in a kind of holy transfiguration, pouring

forth the light of a soul that had held high communion with Heaven. Dr. Nevins, a friend and associate in life, and now a fellow-sleeper in death, said :

“I anticipate that the best written memoir of him will be to the living, speaking, and acting Summerfield, very much what his best printed discourse was to the unwritten eloquence he used to pour forth from his heart in his most ordinary sermons ; for the eloquence of our friend was pre-eminently that of the heart. It was the oratory of nature ; and I have often remarked that in any age, in any country, in any language, and under all circumstances, he would have been the same magic master of the human heart that we felt him to be.”

It is said of Whitefield that he would sometimes rise in the desk, and for a minute or two looking in dead silence around on his vast audience, as if salvation or perdition teemed in every cast of his eye, would burst into tears, while the swift contagion, ere he uttered a word, had reached every heart that could feel, and dimmed every eye that could weep.

Domina rerum eloquentiæ vis, says Quintilian ; *the power of eloquence controls every thing*, and the general truth has been exemplified at the bar, in the legislative assembly, at the head of armies, in the popular convocation, and in the pulpit. Men are fond of impulse, and some gifted spirits know well how to reach it in man. Summerfield was not of the vehement class of orators ; his was not a daring and impetuous spirit. He rather chose to touch the tender chords of feeling, and awake the softer music of the human soul. This quality of tenderness in the young preacher seemed

almost insensibly to run into a shade of melancholy; whether from the strength of his sympathy for the afflictions of humanity, or from a prevailing mental impression, deepened by a knowledge of the delicate condition of his own physical frame, that Heaven had decreed to him a brief career on earth, or from a combination of both these causes, the effect was as manifest as the presentiment was certain. The interest which the natural expression of his countenance excited was heightened by that cadaverous paleness, which spread its premonitory hue over it, too palpable not to alarm his friends :

“For in his garland as he stood
Ye might discern the *cypress bud*.”

The chaplet of his youthful fame was indeed green around his brow, but there was interwoven a dark leaf, which intimated too plainly that the finger of death was there.

Summerfield felt a strong attachment to children. To love and sympathize with such is said to be a happy symptom of our moral being; to indicate a pure, ductile, and generous nature; to be evidential of an ingenuous and childlike spirit in him, who can blend his own feelings with those of the little ones, model the images of his own mind so as to charm their young fancies, and hold the lamp of his reason in such a position that they can walk by its light. Children are the flowers of human existence. He that is insensible to their tender beauty, or does not relish their delicate sweetness, will take no pleasure in bestowing the hand of culture upon them. To win the hearts of children

is no mean conquest. Summerfield discharged this branch of ministerial duty with superior grace and success. He seemed to impart his soul to their souls ; to descend from the dignity and precision of a more elaborate style, and suit his thoughts, words, figures, and feelings to their capacities. It was, in the soft and expressive language of Scripture, "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass," that his doctrine then "distilled" from his lips. He announced his text—let his face relax into one of those sweet smiles peculiar to him—looked benevolently round on the vast assemblage of children (who thronged a church in Baltimore) before him, and seeming to feel something kindling within, exclaimed in a mixed tone of question and assertion by way of exordium, "*That is a sweet text, is it not?*" The effect was electrical. A thousand little faces glittered with smiles, as if reflecting the expression of the fine original that beamed before them. It was as if the hand of a skilful master had swept over an instrument of a thousand strings, creating wondrous harmony without the intermixture of a single discordant note. One thrill of ecstatic emotion seemed to shoot through all hearts.

And then he went on in his own inimitable strain of eloquence to portray the character of young Samuel, touching the picture with tint after tint, as if he held some celestial pencil, sketching each successive trait with a masterly hand, and completing the whole in a style of such chaste and glowing beauty, as held us all captive to that mysterious power which rules in the empire of mind. It was a noble effort of sanctified genius, the recollections of which must still linger in

the memory of those who heard it, though the voice of the charmer has long since been hushed in the silence of the grave, and the harp of the minstrel that discoursed such sweet music has been broken by the hand of death. One cannot but think of a beautiful vase of roses, which, though riven into fragments, and given to the dust, still yields its fragrance; even so as when

“On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.”

This eminent preacher has been compared to Whitefield, but erroneously. He was earnest, but not like him, impetuous. He did not, like that celebrated preacher, storm the kingdom of Satan, and carry it at the point of the sword, but he was always an example of courage and conduct to the “sacramental host of God’s elect,” and maintained the cause of the Redeemer, if not by direct and overwhelming attacks on the enemy, by strengthening the hands of the friends of the cause. He proved the high virtues of *affection* in the pulpit. Not that he daintily wreathed the sword of the Spirit with flowers, using it as a fancy weapon to exhibit his theological dexterity, but he aimed to conquer by LOVE, the gentlest, strongest, holiest, and most effectual instrument in the whole armory of heaven.

Whitefield was not deficient in tenderness; his path to the sinner’s heart was often wet with tears; but he struck everywhere; he swung his glittering weapon in every direction, and it was all one with him to preach in the cushioned and carpeted pulpit to lords, ladies, and gentlemen, or to encounter a mob of stage-players

and merry-andrews in the open field. He insisted on instant, visible, decisive action in his hearers. All was commotion where he moved. The very earth would seem to be shaken with the thunder of his eloquence; the heavens seemed, in the bold metaphor of Isaiah, to "drop down from above, and the skies to pour down righteousness," when he set the trumpet of the Gospel to his lips, and made the notes of salvation or perdition ring in the ears of dying men. Such unwonted sounds startled the multitude into life, rousing energies that were forthwith enlisted either for or against the mighty cause which he advocated with the boldness and fervor of one who had received immediate commission from Heaven. His sacred ambition was content with nothing short of the conquest of thousands.

The qualities of Summerfield's preaching were different from these. His was a strong, but not a vehement spirit. In him there was more of the light than of the fire of truth. It did not leap from him in flashing coruscations. It rather emanated in a mild radiance, softening and subduing all hearts.

"By him, in strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispered peace."

At a near view nothing remarkable could be discovered in his face, but when he reached the sacred desk, and stood there "the messenger of God, the legate of the skies," he appeared to have passed through a kind of transformation—I might call it a *transfiguration* but for the sacred appropriation of that sublime term; it was a change well befitting the place and the occasion. His countenance shone with the lustre of him whose

habit was that of one "communing with the skies." To borrow an illustration from the sister arts, the pictures which he drew, like those of Titian, were graceful, delicate, and truthful as nature itself; while those of Whitefield, like the paintings of Michael Angelo, were bold, vivid, and sublime even to the height of terror, though not beyond that of truth, if all the truth on these awful subjects could be known: The illustrious painter last mentioned declared of the former that "if he had studied amid the masterpieces of antiquity, he would have eclipsed all the painters in the world." I will not say that if Summerfield had lived and studied profoundly he would have eclipsed all other preachers; but he would have found an elevated place somewhere in the diadem of consecrated glory, "the royal diadem in the hand of God," where he would have shone with no ordinary brightness.

Whitefield was in sacred eloquence, what Handel was in sacred music. There was an air, a soul, and a *movement* in his oratory, which, as already hinted, created indescribable emotion in his vast assemblies; and if Handel, with a thousand auxiliary voices and instruments astonished the multitude in Westminster Abbey—even to raising them on their feet—by the performance of his MESSIAH, Whitefield did greater wonders in his single person by *preaching* the Messiah to the immense crowds in Tottenham Court Road and Moorfields. On the other hand, Summerfield may be compared to *Mozart*, rich, tender, pensive, and pathetic; and like that great master, who is said to have composed his own requiem, seeming in some of his last efforts to be preaching his own funeral sermon. The

success of the former was, I had almost said, without bounds till death, which puts a period to every thing earthly, sealed his labors, and sent him to their reward. The success of the latter was necessarily more limited, for his life was indeed a span, though a noble one. Such minds of ethereal flame often spring most quickly to their heavenly source. If those thus planted in the house of the Lord do flourish in the courts of our God, how transient their bloom and beauty !

“ Like a tree

That with the weight of its own golden fruitage
Stoops gently to the dust.”

Seven brief years completed his ministerial career, while that of the immortal master of pulpit eloquence was protracted through a whole generation, which he so faithfully “served” till the very hour when he “fell asleep;” a generation on which he exerted so mighty an influence to the day when he descended from the pulpit for the last time, and was unrobed for his dying bed.

The subject of this sketch can never be forgotten by those who beheld his successful labors in the cause of benevolence; for young as he was, he was a distinguished and influential patron of the various religious societies which form so brilliant an era in the commencement of the present century. How great was the blank created in the “feast of weeks,” as he was accustomed to call the May anniversaries ! For meetings of this character he possessed a peculiar aptitude. It was on such occasions that he appeared as one in whom the spirit of charity was blended in beautiful alliance with

the soul of genius and eloquence ; and by the charm of this consecrated union did he hold captive the hearts of listening thousands.

His first speech after his arrival in this country, which was before the American Bible Society, awoke a thrill of admiring surprise, which, swelling into an expectant wonder, took strong possession of the public mind, and at once prepared the way for those immense congregations which assembled to hear whenever it was known he was to preach. By a kind of natural and unanimous consent, the voice of the public became the unsolicited herald of his preaching. The question was not when or where—that was speedily known—but how shall we get a seat, or a stand ? Hours were patiently waited by many for the sake of a convenient seat, and they thought themselves amply repaid by the preacher.

His last speech before his departure for the “better country” was delivered before the American Tract Society at its formation, and in the same hall—that of the New York City Hotel—in which he delivered his first. But oh how changed in 1825, even from the delicate youth of 1821 ! It was the writer’s happiness to hear him on that memorable occasion, and we all felt or feared, as we looked on his fragile form and pale, attenuated features, that we were listening to the dying cadences of one whose spirit was already attuned to the harmonies of the Seraphim in Heaven. He was seldom equaled, never surpassed in the ability with which, on short premeditation, he conducted his part in assemblies for the promotion of charity. There was no dull prosing—no labored harangue—no artificial display,

but an easy and familiar address, always pertinent, generally arising out of what had been previously said (for he usually spoke last), and often accompanied by high dramatic interest and effect. He could suffuse the eyes of his audience with tears or gild their faces with smiles at pleasure. Pictures of religious happiness, of filial and parental tenderness, he drew with a masterly pencil. There were the soft tints of hope, the full light of assurance, and the dark shades of fear, all brought out in striking relief when he would present us the portrait of the Christian. The prosperity of the Church, and the glory of her Lord and King, were favorite subjects with him. It was not in logical acuteness and great argument that he excelled, but rather in the graces of thought, style, elocution, and action. His was not the sententious brevity, the terse diction, and compact argumentation of Wesley, but his taste was delicate and correct; his imagination lively, brilliant, and discursive, though chaste, as might be expected in one who had so earnestly studied the poets of the English classical age, and who above all had made himself familiar with the language and spirit of the Bible. If his thoughts were not original, their combinations were often original and striking. His metaphors and images were managed without the appearance of art. There was no extravagance in his hyperbole beyond what a just taste would sanction. In personification and apostrophe he sometimes indulged with great power and effect. In climax he was at times admirable. An interrogation or exclamation from his lips came with a spirit and meaning which evaporated in the process of the press, or of recital by another.

One would as soon think of appreciating the beauty and excellence of a piece of music by reading the *notes*, instead of hearing it performed by the master-composer. He reminded us of Cicero's definition of an eloquent man: *Eloqui composite, ornate, copiose, oratoris est*; for orderly arrangement, chaste and ornamental imagery, and copiousness of thought and expression, were predominant qualities in his oratory.

His familiarity with the English Bible—for he did not claim to be deeply learned in the languages—gave him immense advantage in preaching. So gracefully was its diction interwoven with the structure of his discourse, “like apples of gold in a network of silver,” that the whole came with the beauty and energy of inspiration. For example:

At a public missionary meeting in Baltimore, a distinguished preacher, who preceded him, concluded an able speech thus:

“I will not detain you longer. I know the anxiety of the audience to enjoy the rich feast that is to follow, and I wish to enjoy it with them. We have reserved the best wine to the last.”

His imagination kindled at the allusion. He arose, and looking round on the immense congregation, said:

“The gentleman says ‘he has reserved the best wine till the last.’ This is inverting the order of the feast; ‘every man at the *beginning* doth set forth the good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse;’ but I have not the worse wine to offer you, mine is mere water, but if the master of

the feast should deign to touch the water, and turn it to wine, it may be the very best wine; but recollect, my friends, the excellency would not be of man, but of God."

So when at the meeting of the American Bible Society in New York, the venerable president, Elias Boudinot, his head silvered over with the frost of a sparkling old age, and his form bending under the weight of well-spent years, moved with feeble step but with an animated soul to take the chair, Summerfield, seizing the interest of the passing scene, as he rose to speak, said :

"When I saw that venerable man, too aged to warrant the hope of being with you at another anniversary, he reminded me of *Jacob leaning upon the top of his staff, blessing his children before he departed!*" Then advertng to the progress of the cause in England and America, he added :

"When we first launched our untried vessel on the deep, the storms of opposition roared, and the waves dashed angrily around us, and we had hard work to keep her head to the wind; we were faint with rowing, and our strength would soon have been gone, but we cried, '*Lord, save us, or we perish!*' when a light shone upon the waters, and we saw a form walking upon the troubled sea, like unto that of the Son of God, and he drew near the ship, and we knew that it was JESUS! And he stepped upon the deck, and laid his hand on the helm, and he said unto the winds and the waves, '*Peace, be still! and there was a great calm!*'"

"Wonderful, wonderful!" exclaimed a cool critic, who had expected little from the stripling, yet unknown

to American fame, succeeding a powerful speaker of ripe intellect, and a logical and finished eloquence, who had just sat down amid murmurs of applause; "he talks like an angel from Heaven." The breath of the young orator's eloquence had scattered his prejudices to the winds, and awakened in their stead the most enthusiastic eulogium. It was a heartfelt tribute to the natural, inimitable eloquence of the man. When to such sentiments, so finely expressed, we add the charm of the voice, the eye, the gesture, the person, the whole manner, all admirably adapted to them, we may imagine how complete and overpowering was the impression made on an assembly of minds linked together by a common sympathy, while one magic hand struck that wondrous chord, that trembled with ecstasy in every responsive bosom.

The death of this amiable young man, which was in keeping with his life, took place in the city of New York, on the 13th of June, 1825. On the previous night a beloved sister approached his bed, and imprinting the kiss of affection on his wan and pallid cheek, bade him "*good-night.*" He responded in feeble, but affectionate accents, "*Good-night.*" These were his last words. He continued gently to sink away till he fell asleep in Jesus.

The concourse of people that attended his funeral was immense. His body reposes in the Methodist burial-ground in Brooklyn, and on his grave rests a monumental tablet with the following inscription composed by the writer of this sketch, at the request of his friends, which he will be pardoned for subjoining, as a suitable conclusion of his reminiscences :

Sacred to the Memory
of

THE REV. JOHN SUMMERFIELD, A. M.,

Æt. 27;

A Preacher of the Methodist Connection;

Born in England—born again in Ireland;

By the first a child of Genius; by the second a child
of God;

Called to preach the Gospel at the age of nineteen,
In England, Ireland, and America.

Himself the Spiritual Father of a numerous and
happy family.

At this Tomb

Genius, Eloquence, and Religion mingle their tears.

Holy in life, ardent in love and incessant in labor,

He was to the Church a pattern, to sinful man
an angel of mercy, to the world a blessing

In him were rarely combined gentleness
and energy:

By the one attracting universal love,

By the other diffusing happiness around him.

Singular sweetness and simplicity of manners,

Inimitable eloquence in the pulpit,

Natural, graceful, and fervent,

Rendered him the charm of the social circle and
the idol of the popular assembly.

Upon the lips that moulder beneath this marble

Thousands hung in silent wonder.

His element was not the breath of fame,

But the communion and favor of God.

He closed a scene of patient suffering, and
slept in Jesus,

In the City of New York,

On the 13th day of June, 1825.

By Faith he lived on earth,

In Hope he died,

By Love he lives in Heaven.

XXXVIII.

Rev. Sylvester Larned

THE celebrated Robert Hall said of a youth who early deceased: "The admiration he excited while living, and the deep and universal concern expressed at his death, demonstrate him to have been no ordinary character; but one of those rare specimens of human nature which the great Author of it produces at distant intervals, and exhibits for a moment, *while he is hastening to make them up among his jewels.*" The remark is applicable to the subject of this sketch. SYLVESTER LARNED was a native of Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. In the midst of the bold and beautiful scenery of that region he first drew breath. There he spent that childhood and youth, whose strong affections were awakened amid communion with those forms of nature which are fitted to make powerful and lasting impressions on minds of a certain constitution. How beautiful the adaptation of the external works of God to that high-born, noble, living spirit within, which finds in them the element of a grand existence and a growing activity, linking man—mortal though he is—with those intelligences, a "little lower" than whom he was created! "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Hence that mysterious thing called GENIUS, the *essence* of which who can penetrate; the *effects* of which who does not admire? Poetry—what is it, after all the defi-

nitions and descriptions to which it has been subjected? What is its cause? Where dwelleth the spirit of beauty, of which it is born? Hath the critic entered into it, and anatomized it? Eloquence—what is its essence—its nature, as separated from its effects? As well might investigation “enter into the springs of the sea,” or expound “the way where light dwelleth.” Thus does the Author of these sublime wonders challenge the limited capacities of man. Still, man is a noble being, great and majestic amid his moral ruin. “Rare specimens” there are among men to attract interest and awaken admiration, though often snatched away to adorn a higher sphere.

LARNED was one of these. He was a child of genius, and that genius was developed at an early period of his life. It shone out with singular brilliancy at the age of thirteen. I mean that at this age the public were first made acquainted with his extraordinary powers, though to private circles he had for some time been known as a youth of excellent promise. In the presence of a large and enlightened assembly he delivered at that age an oration on the 4th of July, which excited the public wonder. Here were the elements, I was about to say, of the *future* orator; but there was the orator himself, young indeed, his education just commenced, but exhibiting the traits and qualifications in an incipient state, which in riper years might be expected to stamp him as an extraordinary man. We beheld in him at this period of adolescence a deep and strong enthusiasm, a bold and manly decision of character, a certain fearless advocacy of free and patriotic sentiments, an inextinguishable love of country, an energetic

sympathy for classic modes of thought, and a way of giving utterance to the teeming conceptions of his intellect, which strangely captivated his hearers. Fluency of expression is sometimes an evidence of weakness rather than of strength, but in young Larned it was combined with a vigor of thought, evidencing that among the constituents of his genius there were two qualities which reflected a strong interest on each other, while they harmonized in a very delightful manner. His mind seemed to turn with ardor to scenes and subjects that awakened patriotic recollections; to the struggles of the spirit of freedom with the dark genius of despotism in whatever form; perhaps because his childhood was so near the period of our own Revolution, and he had heard from the lips of his father, who was one of the actors in that immortal drama (Colonel Simon Larned, also commander of the 9th Regiment of Infantry in the last war), the story of that conflict which issued in the establishment of the North American Republic. In the history of that struggle there is deep and instructive philosophy. It was no wild and sudden outbreak of popular fury; no aimless insurrection of an undisciplined mob. It was the serene, steadfast, and determined uprising of an intelligent people, who had studied their rights, as Pym and Hampden studied theirs, in the inspired Book of God, and the equally inspired dictates of eternal rectitude. The seeds of the conflict were indeed sown two hundred years before the bursting forth and the branching out of the mighty tree that now overshadows this western continent.

The subject of Larned's oration at the commence-

ment at Middlebury College was the "Fall of Poland," on which he uttered the sentiments of his heart in a tone of lofty enthusiasm, that would have done honor to the ardent and patriotic muse of Thomas Campbell. For in the bosom of the true orator must dwell the soul of the poet, however unused he may be to rhyme, which is but the fettering the living forms of poetry. The great kings in the empire of imagination have refused subjection to the rhyme. Isaiah, Homer, Virgil, Milton, how could they set forth the august conceptions of their minds in fetters? How could they manacle the beautiful and noble offspring of their imaginations? So the orator is free as the air he breathes, and in his freedom pours forth things that rouse, animate, and kindle up the souls of those whom he addresses. "No discourse can be eloquent," says Goldsmith,* "that does not elevate the mind. Pathetic eloquence, it is true, has for its object only to affect; but I appeal to men of sensibility, whether their pathetic feelings are not accompanied with some degree of elevation. We may then call eloquence and sublimity the same thing, since it is impossible to be one without feeling the other. Hence it follows that we may be eloquent in any language, since no language refuses to paint those sentiments with which we are thoroughly impressed. Eloquence is not in the words, but in the subject, and in great concerns the more simply any thing is expressed, it is generally the more sublime. True eloquence does not consist, as the rhetoricians assure us, in saying great things in a sublime style, but

* Essays.

in a simple style; for there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a sublime style; the sublimity lies only in the things, and when *they* are not so, the language may be turgid, *affected*, metaphysical, but not *affecting*." In a word, the elegant author of the *Deserted Village* declares that man eloquent "who transfers the passion or sentiment with which he is moved himself into the breast of another." Such is the art of persuasion; the power of kindling impassioned feelings within bosoms that permit the orator to open a communication with them, and to speed the electric stream from heart to heart. With all this the element of conviction must be strongly mingled, for truth—which is the instrument of conviction—is required by men; or, at least the imitation of truth, as in the drama, the pictorial art, and some other branches of intellectual and imaginative exertion. "To feel your subject thoroughly," continues the same classic author, "and to speak without fear, are the only rules of eloquence, properly so called, which I can offer. The orator should be strongly impressed, which is generally the effect of a fine and exquisite sensibility, and not that transient and superficial emotion which he excites in the greatest part of his audience." And who should be so deeply charged with this exquisite sensibility as the orator of sacred subjects? So Cowper:

"Much impressed

Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men."

This is the picture drawn by the poet, but that in his day it was difficult to find originals to it in England, may be safely inferred from other lines in the second book of the Task. And in a previous generation Goldsmith wrote: "I have attended most of our pulpit orators, who, it must be owned, write extremely well upon the text they assume. To give them their due, also, they read their sermons with elegance and propriety, but this goes but a very short way in true eloquence. The speaker must be moved. In this, in this alone our English divines are deficient. With the most pretty, gentleman-like serenity, they deliver their cool discourses, and address the reason of men who have never reasoned in all their lives. They are told of cause and effect, of beings self-existent, and the universal scale of beings. They are informed of the merits of the Bangorian controversy, and the absurdity of an intermediate state. The spruce preacher reads his lucubrations without lifting his nose from the text, and never ventures to earn the shame of an enthusiast."

With a keener satire Cowper takes up the strain :

"Behold the picture! Is it like? Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again; pronounce a text,
Cry hem—and reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well-bred whisper close the scene!"

But while the satirist thus pointed his weapon at the failings of the clergy, there had already risen men of another stamp, whom Providence had endowed with

extraordinary qualifications for an extraordinary work. Whitefield and Wesley appeared at a critical period in the eighteenth century, when, as Bishop Butler said in his Analogy, "it is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." Then follows his profound and immortal work on the analogy of religion to the constitution and course of nature, so full of the "seeds of things." That sentence was written in May, 1736. In the preceding December Whitefield had been ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry by Bishop Benson, who presented him with five guineas in addition to his episcopal blessing. He had but one written sermon with which to commence his career. After his first sermon was preached, a report was brought to the Bishop that it had driven fifteen persons mad! The good Bishop replied that he "hoped the madness would not be forgotten before the next Sunday."

Goldsmith's notion of the right kind of preaching seemed realized in the young candidate for sacred fame. "The good preacher should adopt no model, write no sermons, study no periods; let him but understand his subject, the language he speaks, and be convinced of the truths he delivers. It is amazing to what heights eloquence of this kind may reach. This is that elo-

quence the ancients represented as lightning, bearing down every opposer; this is the power which has turned whole assemblies into astonishment, admiration, and awe, that is described by the torrent, the flame, and every other instance of irresistible impetuosity." In another essay toward reforming the English clergy, he says: "Our regular divines may borrow instruction from even Methodists, who go their circuits, and preach prizes among the populace. *Even Whitefield* may be placed as a model to some of our young divines. Let them join to their own good sense his earnest manner of delivery." Yes, there was earnestness in his delivery, and in every thing he undertook. His life was one uninterrupted exhibition of earnestness. It was an eloquent life. Now came a man who met men with a direct look; addressed their consciences; appealed to their sensibilities; demanded in the name of God the immediate discharge of their high and solemn obligations to their Maker. They who had so long slumbered under easy sermons were angry when those slumbers were disturbed. They hated to be roused, and cried innovation, extravagance, vulgarity. Prejudice discolored and distorted every action of the zealous divine. Pride was offended. Calumny spared no arrows. Persecution withheld no violence.

"The very butt of slander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever shot."

Yet all that floating malaria, engendered in the bog of human depravity, has long since been swept away, and a pure and sweet atmosphere surrounds that venerated name, which Cowper said "a poet must not speak,"

and therefore called him *Leuconomos* in "well-sounding Greek." For such a man to cross the Atlantic seventeen times in those days, when the all but miraculous steamers were in the bosom of futurity, was no small affair, and was followed by no small results.

The influence of Whitefield and Edwards on theology and pulpit eloquence in America was immense. There was in those two men indeed "a diversity of gifts, but the same spirit." The intellectual prevailed in Edwards; the impassioned in Whitefield. Pure truth came forth from the mind of the one, as nakedly demonstrated as it ever was on the pages of Newton and Locke. (Edwards read Locke with enthusiasm when a child.) From the soul of Whitefield it came forth arrayed in the gorgeous robes of his own many-colored imagination; baptized in the tenderness of his own sympathetic spirit. At times, indeed, the thunders of Sinai seemed to shake the sacred desk, but the softer music of the harp of Zion was more congenial with his compassionate spirit; though he was always bold for God, and braved danger in every form for the sake of the salvation of sinners. It is not strange that the American preachers venerate even to enthusiasm the memory of such a man, and visit his dust, enshrined, as it is, in the bosom of New England, with feelings of indescribable interest. His labors were for us; his rest is with us; his example is before us. The first were indefatigable; the second is peaceful; the last glorious.

No wonder that the young American divine should be charmed with such a model. Larned beheld, admired, and resolved to imitate. What he might have

been, had he been permitted to live, instead of dying at the age of twenty-four—a stripling in years, though even then a giant in intellect—unto what admirable maturity of powers and distinction of achievement in his great field he would have attained, we may now conjecture, but cannot certainly know. “I now remember,” says Sir James Mackintosh, in describing his young friend Robert Hall, “the extraordinary union of brilliant fancy with acute intellect, which would have excited more admiration than it has done, if it had been dedicated to the amusement of the great and the learned, instead of being consecrated to the far more noble office of consoling, instructing, and reforming the poor and the forgotten.” And of his eloquence, “it is not a puny and gaudy bauble, fashioned by the tools and tricks of a mechanical rhetorician; it is the natural effusion of a fertile imagination, of an ardent mind, and of a heart glowing with zeal for truth, with reverence for God, and with love for men.”

This would so far describe Larned. That fine union of intellectual vigor with an elegant imagination, joined to strong and deep feeling, which contribute so much to fix a *character*, was manifest in Larned. To this combination may be added those qualities which constitute *decision*, such as a *firm confidence in our own judgment*, to which Foster assigns the first place; then “a state of cogent feeling, an intense ardor of mind, precluding indifference and delay.” Finally, a sustained moral courage, which boldly meets opposition, calmly endures desertion, and confidently commands success. All these properties might be found opening to the view of the observer of his character. He had

not lived long enough to assure us of the continued development of those qualities which Foster ascribes to Howard; in his estimate, the model of the right kind of decision of character. Of the energy of his determination he says, that "it was the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds; as a great river in its customary state is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent." With eminent truth might these remarks be applied to Whitefield, the almost miraculous prolongation of whose labors, and the brilliancy of whose success, indicated a mind furnished by nature and grace with the most exalted endowments. His course implied "an inconceivable severity of conviction that he had *one thing to do*, and that he who would do some great thing in this short life must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity." So did Larned. He gave himself up to one self-denying work, that of home missions—to missionary work in the most dangerous and destitute parts of his beloved country. He had repeated calls to parishes in refined cities, and amid scenes of rural beauty and salubrity, from which it would seem almost impossible to turn away; quite so for an ordinary mind, but he was resolved. He would not leave his post of danger and trial in New Orleans for any fairer sphere; no, said he, "not for the bishopric of New England—of creation."

It was a forlorn hope. The yellow fever was raging around him; its victims were daily carried to the grave. His friends were disappearing under the fatal malady; *he* might next be summoned. It was the battle-field of Death—more fearful than the ordinary battle-field, for there the foe is *seen*. Here the victim was struck down by an invisible hand. “I throw myself,” he wrote, “into the hands of a wise God, and hope for grace to meet all his allotments.” On the last Sabbath in August, 1820, he selected for his text, as if with a kind of prescience of the future, the words of the heroic martyr who was “always delivered unto death:” “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” His manly form, which was one of superior elegance and majesty, stood erect in the pulpit, while various emotions were struggling within, and finally, having completed his discourse, he sat down and wept! The next day he was attacked by the yellow fever, and on Thursday, the day on which he completed his twenty-fourth year, he died. A costly sacrifice, but in a noble cause, for a glorious Master, and with victorious results. The public seemed unwilling to believe the report of his death. Was that voice, whose enchanting tones thrilled through the hearts of assembled thousands in New Orleans, to be heard no more? Must the youthful orator descend so early, so abruptly from the theater of his fame, to enter the cold and inhospitable sepulcher, where all eloquence is dumb, all beauty decays, all grace perishes, and the form that was instinct with life becomes the image of death, and is abandoned to its last repose by the living and the loving, as it has already been abandoned by the animating soul; and there, under the

moldering drapery that hangs gloomily over its couch, sleeps its long sleep, undisturbed by the rush of the world without, unaffected by its own humiliation; the same to the king and the beggar, for splendid robes and sordid rags would molder and crumble alike there; the same for saint and sinner; only the flesh of the former rests in hope, till this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality? Yes, this is the lot of all.

It should not so much concern us how, when, or where we die, as how to live. So the angel in Milton, speaking to Adam now fallen:

“Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest
Live well; how long or short permit to Heaven.”

This is the true philosophy, which none can gainsay. Still, it is a dictate of nature, of reason, and propriety, of the very oracles of God, to lament the departure of the great and the good. “The removal of *any* worthy minister while in full possession and activity of his faculties, is a mournful occurrence; but there is the consideration that many such remain, and that perhaps an equal may follow, where the esteemed instructor is withdrawn. But the feeling in the present instance* is of a loss altogether irreparable. The cultivated portion of the hearers have a sense of privation partaking of desolateness. An animating influence that pervaded, and enlarged, and raised their minds, is extinct. While ready to give due honor to all valuable

* Foster on the death of Rev. Robert Hall.

preachers, and knowing that the lights of religious instruction will still shine with useful lustre, and new ones continually rise, they involuntarily and pensively turn to look at the last fading colors in the distance where the greater luminary has set!"

Uncultivated hearers, too, mourn with an equal intensity and probably a superior sincerity of sorrow, the death of their spiritual guide, as did the peasants of Oberlin their beloved Neff, and the plain parishioners of Patterson and Payson, their guides to heaven. The gay and the cultivated may admire the *preacher*—the *orator*, whose eloquence rouses all their sensibilities—but it must be the pious and the prayerful who admire and love the *pastor*, the *shepherd*, that personally seeks out the flock, and "calls them by name."

On the youthful Larned all eyes were fixed in admiration, as one of the most brilliant and promising pulpit orators that had appeared in the American desk; when he departed, therefore, it was as if some radiant orb, to use the words of Scott on the death of Byron, "had suddenly disappeared from the sky, at the moment when every telescope was leveled," not for the purpose, as in the case of Byron, of "examining the spots which dimmed its brightness," but to behold its unstained splendors, and to anticipate with gladness its future path in the holy sphere to which it seemed assigned by the will of God. Alas! that it should be so soon and suddenly struck from its heavenly orbit.

"Alas for us! but not for thee:

We cannot choose but weep the more

Deep for the dead the grief must be,

Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before!"

As the Apocalyptic angel that was seen standing in the sun towered in majesty far above the ordinary train of angelic spirits, that waited on the throne of the Supreme, however excellent their glory, so it is given to some among the sons of genius to be pre-eminent in intellectual stature; to develop more profound sensibilities; to exercise a certain moral power over their fellow-men, to which by a sort of natural dictate of the inward man submission is yielded on their part. The mind of Larned was one of great activity. In private conversation he was rapid, full, overpowering. With burning enthusiasm he gave utterance to the teeming thoughts of his rich and fertile mind. He had a strongly marked voice, which was in keeping with the style of his mind. Ideas seemed stirring within him with an energy amounting almost to impetuosity; and they would take wing in private conversation or public speaking with a freedom and boldness, alternately rousing, fascinating, surprising, or astonishing. His extemporaneous powers were of the first order. As some lofty conception arose in his mind, his brow would gather, his fine blue eye sparkle, as if the very genius of persuasion sat enthroned in its orb, and raising his arm, he would retire a little, and then advancing with a combined dignity and grace, would pour upon his delighted auditors the full and flowing tide of a natural and resistless eloquence. There were times when he seemed utterly unable to repress those out-gushings of feeling from the deep fountains within, which so well authenticate the sentiment of Horace, "Si vis me flere," &c., and the effect is well remembered by those who sat under his preaching, and whose

sensibilities responded to those of the impassioned orator. Who could behold those outward symbols of the conflicting emotions that agitated his anxious bosom without inwardly exclaiming: This is no fictitious exhibition; it is nature; it is the necessity of the man in his condition—the ambassador of God to guilty men. Those tears are such as he—the Incarnate One—would have shed in the like circumstances; such as He did shed when, standing by the grave of a fellow-man, and recollecting the sentence which Avenging Justice had in the day of the apostasy pronounced on the race: “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,” He asked, “Where have ye laid him?” and burst into weeping! Oh, heaven-born sympathy! pouring out thy heart on the ruins of humanity, not in despair, but in hope of a noble regeneration on earth, and a final resurrection to glory! Victorious faith! that can extract the sting of death, and disarm the grave of its terrors. These and kindred themes are the sources of pulpit eloquence. What is the grandeur of States and empires when laid in the scale with the destiny of the deathless soul?

Larned was accustomed to select great subjects, both because they were congenial to his mind, which possessed a natural breadth and comprehensiveness, and because he felt a conscious power of reaching, so far as it is given to man to attain, to the height of their great argument, and of setting forth their correlative truths in due harmony and proportion.

The Rev. R. R. Gurley, in his brief and eloquent “Life of Larned,” remarks that there will be found in his sermons “a combination of unity and simplicity, of beauty and force, of imagination and passion, of har-

mony and just proportion, of fullness and completeness, extremely rare in our own or in any other language. Closely and compactly wrought, the purpose of the whole seems pervading every part, while each part contributes essentially to the one object of the whole."

Though in him dwelt the poetic spirit and feeling, "the vision and faculty divine," under the influence of which he occasionally indulged in a secret worship of the muses, he felt that higher duties demanded the restraint of that propension, and on one occasion only did he permit any poetic composition from his pen to be made public; an ode which was sung at an agricultural festival in his native village of Pittsfield.

In the science of moral demonstration, as well as in the more popular department of homiletics, he excelled. His few published sermons abundantly sustain this remark. In them may be seen the habitual subservience of a naturally exuberant imagination to the purposes of high-toned, essential, and sublime truth. The "airy servitors" of the beautiful faculty fall gracefully into their humble places, content to wait on the nobler forms of masculine thought, or to be considered as modest gems on the main texture of the discourse. If, as Sir Walter Scott has said, "*originality* is the first attribute of genius," then might this young American preacher justly claim the divine endowment. He was too rich in the treasures of thought to borrow even from the more wealthy. He was too impulsive to copy even from masters. He repaired to his own golden urn, and thence with enthusiasm drew the sparkling element with which he refreshed other minds. He took the mysterious key intrusted to him by the Creator, and

with it unlocked magazines of thought, emotion, and persuasion, with which to instruct, to rouse, and to convince. To act, and to act with the greatest effect, on the impulse of the moment, was one of his distinguishing qualifications. It was when under vigorous exercise that his genius assumed a genial, characteristic glow; it was when his mind, lighted up by the rays of truth, was wakened into clear and energetic action, that its fine qualities were perceived, as the sculptured devices on a beautiful alabaster vase are best seen when it is illuminated within; or, to quote the language of a poet, contemplating the object of his admiration:

“Viewed round and round, as lucid diamonds throw,
Still as you turn them, a revolving glow,
So did his mind reflect with secret ray,
In various beauty, heaven’s refulgent day.”

We have an *American* eloquence in the pulpit, as well as at the bar and in the legislative forum. It is bold and free, like the physical features of our country; clear and sparkling, like our native lakes; often original and striking, like our forest views; and, like our character, eminently practical.* Larned’s eloquence delighted Western people, among whom he traveled—the rough and the rude, as well as the polished and the cultivated. The former became gentle under its influence; the latter were charmed with his elegance, and awed by his faithfulness. The trump of fame had widely spread his name, when the “insatiate archer”

* One of Larned’s most splendid efforts is said to have been made at the laying of the corner-stone of his church on a 4th of July, when he addressed an assembly of seven thousand people.

laid the shaft on the string, and he fell, like a daring warrior, in the front of the battle. He counted not his life dear to him, that he might finish his course with joy, and deliver his testimony for God. Humanity wept at the sacrifice; Charity drooped her head in tender sorrow; Faith bowed with reverent submission to the high behest of heaven, while Hope lifted the veil from the bosom of the future, and pointed us to the upward flight of the ransomed spirit to its home among the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven. The loss to the Church was great and palpable; to *his* church it was irreparable.

The form of Larned was tall, stately, and upright; strong in the vigor of youth; capable of great endurance. Greenough would not have desired to look farther for a model of an Apollo. It combined in impressive proportions the qualities of strength and beauty, happily corresponding to the character of his mind. If either preponderated, it was the first. His face possessed a manly beauty, from the fascination of which it was difficult to escape. A rich and expressive blue distinguished his large, transparent eye, that mirror of the soul's thoughts and emotions. The configuration of his mouth was very striking. It resembled an archer's bow, unstrung, but conveying the idea of power in rest. And so, indeed, did the words of that mouth "abide in strength," like the bow of Joseph, the "arms of whose hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." But the visible symbols of the invisible and intellectual are turned to dust. Sleep on, dear youth, till He who is the resurrection and the life shall reanimate that dust, and restore that form to the

likeness of himself in incorruptible beauty and unfading glory. With the sainted Heber, who, like Larned, fell by the pestilence in the missionary field, we may sing in elegiac strains :

“Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Since God was thy ransom, thy guardian, thy guide ;
He gave thee, he took thee, and he will restore thee,
And Death hath no sting, since the Saviour has died.”

THE END.

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